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THE

PRESENT STATE OF HAYTI,

(SAINT DOMINGO,)

WITH REMARKS

ON ITS

AGRICULTURE, COMMERCE, LAWS, RELIGION,

FINANCES, AND POPULATION,

ETC. ETC.

BY JAMES FRANKLIN.

LONDON:

JOHN MURRAY, ALBEMARLE STREET.

MDCCCXXVIII.

1828

66-2573-106

G. WOODFALL, ANGEL COURT, SKINNER STREET, LONDON.

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PREFACE.

THE Author has prepared this work for the press somewhat hastily, and under many circumstances which heavily oppressed him; he hopes therefore that the want of arrangement, and the dearth of matter which may be observed in his narrative, will not subject it to a severe condemnation. In presenting it to the public, he is not actuated by any personal considerations, his object being to convey some information respecting the resources of a country, and the character of a people, which have been so variously represented. The short delineation here attempted will, in all probability, suffice to shew that the accounts which have been given at different times of Hayti and its inhabitants have been much too highly coloured by the zealous advocates of negro independence; and he is ready to confess that at one time he was somewhat dazzled by the description, and was almost made a convert to their opinions. It having been his lot however, at a subsequent period, to hold considerable intercourse with the country, he has been enabled to form what he considers a more correct estimate of its present con-

dition. Experience has convinced him that the representations so generally received of the improvement which it has made are greatly exaggerated, and he is not without the hope that the following sheets will convey more correct information on the subject, and thus prove useful to the merchant, if not interesting to the general reader.

He readily admits that in the historical part he has touched upon matters which have been already handled by other and much abler writers; this could not be very well avoided, the annals of Hayti affording but few events, and those having been often detailed. He conceived that such a summary of the history of the country would be necessary to illustrate the cause of the revolution, to shew the decline which ensued in agriculture and commerce, the decay of knowledge, and the progress of vice and immorality among the inhabitants.

Actuated therefore by the desire of throwing some light on the state of Hayti, and giving a faithful representation of the condition of its population, he ventures to solicit the attention of the public to the facts which have fallen under his own personal observation.

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THE PRESENT STATE

OF

HAYTI,

OR SAINT DOMINGO.

INTRODUCTION.

AN account of the present state of Hayti I believe has not yet been submitted to the public; to offer one likely to meet with a favourable reception is, I am aware, an undertaking of considerable difficulty: it requires, no doubt, that the author should be well skilled in the various branches of knowledge, in order to render it in every respect satisfactory and interesting to the public. Ignorant as I acknowledge myself to be in the higher walks of philosophy, and educated solely for the more humble avocations of a mercantile life, I can lay no claim to such acquirements: I must therefore rest my hope of commanding any degree of attention, on the truth and correctness of the statements which I

shall produce, founded as they are on actual observation. I am conscious that I am standing on delicate ground, and touching on a subject likely to excite angry feelings in those who have long been the eulogists of the republic, who have been its advocates when assailed, and who have held it forth to the world as a country in which wealth abounds, virtue flourishes, and freedom reigns triumphant, instead of the oppression, the vice, and the poverty which once prevailed there ; but I will not shrink from the undertaking, though powerful obstacles may present themselves, and formidable opponents be arrayed against me. My object in the following sheets is, to endeavour to dissipate this delusion, and to shew that there is nothing to warrant the unqualified panegyrics poured forth by those individuals who have been the most conspicuous for their zeal and enthusiasm, in holding up Hayti as a “ land flowing with milk and honey ”. In the performance of this, I have no other aim than that of benefiting the merchant and capitalist, the manufacturer, and the trader, who have had no opportunity of visiting a country to which their speculations in commerce may lead them, by guarding them against the shoals and quicksands upon which adventurers, destitute of information, are so frequently wrecked.

The admirers of Hayti have been very industrious in circulating the most deceptive accounts of the state of its commerce, by garbled and exagger-

rated specifications. They have led many to believe that its imports and exports are daily on the increase, and that the resources of the people for the purchase of the products and manufactures of other states receive a gradual and steady augmentation. I am much deceived if I shall not succeed in convincing the reader that this representation is a perfect delusion, and that from the diminished means of the people, the commerce of Hayti, instead of increasing, annually sustains a considerable diminution; and that while the present state of things continues to exist—while its rulers are weak and imbecile, and the mass of the population are kept in a state of the grossest ignorance—there does not appear a ray of hope that any improvement may take place in the circumstances of the country, or that any change will be effected, likely to prove advantageous to foreigners disposed to embark in an intercourse with Hayti.

Several visits to Hayti—in two of which I had, from the nature of my mission, occasion to remain there a considerable time—gave me opportunities of seeing the actual state of it, in all its different branches of agriculture, commerce, finances, and the moral and religious condition of its people, together with the state of its government and the views of its chief. I am therefore encouraged to hope that my details may be productive of some benefit to the commercial part of the community,

and not be altogether unacceptable to others, whose avocations are different, but who may be desirous of correct information respecting those parts of the globe of which they may know but little except the name.

An historical account of Hayti would be a superfluous undertaking; I see nothing to add to what has already been written by Charlevoix, Raynal, Edwards, Walton, and others, in their elaborate and voluminous works, and who have omitted nothing interesting, or worthy of being recorded, from its first discovery by the illustrious Columbus down to a very recent period. Every event connected with its history seems to have been most faithfully detailed by these writers, and their works are entitled to the highest credit and consideration, as containing the best and most authentic account of this very extensive island.

Impelled, no doubt, as they were with a desire to afford to the world every possible information relative to the resources of the country, and of the character and general habits of the people, they have left little to be performed by their successors, except to notice the changes and events which may have taken place since the date of their latest productions. Besides a copious and a faithful historical sketch, they have given a correct statistical view of its agriculture, its commerce, and public revenue; they have also pointed out the slow advances made

by the people in industry, in morality, and in general knowledge: but little, therefore, remains to be said on these subjects, except to call the attention of the reader to the striking contrast which the present situation of the republic exhibits, when compared with that which it displayed before the revolution; to give a brief sketch of Hayti as it is, with an occasional reference to Hayti as it was. I must beg leave to assure my readers, that in executing this task, I am actuated by no unfair nor unjust motives; I am only anxious that the highly coloured statements which have been published respecting its present wealth and prosperity should be submitted to the test of candid and impartial scrutiny. For a series of years Hayti has been made the theme of constant praise, and has excited no little share of the public attention, on account of the unexampled efforts which its slave population made to throw off the fetters by which they had been previously bound, and on account of their having, as their eulogists declare, made the most rapid and extraordinary strides in civilization and social improvement. It must be admitted that the revolution effected in Hayti, was an event almost unparalleled in history; and that a people just emerging from a state of barbarism should have so successfully combated and defeated the finest troops of France, is no doubt a circumstance calculated to call forth no trifling portion of astonishment and ad-

miration : but when the partial eulogists of the Haytians go to the length of asserting that they have arrived at a high degree of moral improvement, that they have reached a state of refinement little inferior to that which generally prevails in Europe, the limits of truth are overstepped : such overstrained assertions are totally destitute even of the semblance of truth, and my personal experience enables me to declare, in the most explicit and unqualified terms, that at this very moment, the people of Hayti are in a worse state of ignorance than the slave population in the British colonies. There are some cases, it is true, in which instances of intelligence have been discovered in the Haytian citizen, but this never occurs except where individuals have had the advantages of an European education, or who, being the descendants of persons who previously to the revolution were possessed of wealth, had the means of travelling, for the purpose of acquiring the manners and customs of more enlightened nations. But taking the people in the aggregate, they are far from having made any advances in knowledge.

It has also been commonly asserted by the friends of Hayti, and I believe very generally credited in Europe, that it preserves its agricultural pre-eminence solely by free labour ; now I think I shall be able to prove to a demonstration that this is not the case, and that it is too evident, from every document that has yet appeared on the subject, that agricul-

ture has been long on the wane, and has sunk to the lowest possible ebb in every district of the republic ; that the true art and principles of the culture of the soil, are not understood, or if in the least known, they are not practically applied. There is nothing to be seen having the least resemblance to a colony, flourishing in the wealth derived from a properly regulated system of agriculture.

On the subject of free labour I shall have occasion to offer a few remarks, and I trust that in doing so, I shall not be considered as inimical to it, wherever it may be found practicable to obtain it ; on the contrary, no man would be more happy to see that our own colonies could be cultivated by free labour, provided a full compensation should be honourably made to those whose interests might be endangered by the experiment, if unsuccessful ; but I shall, I think, be able to shew that this is *absolutely impracticable*, and that the system of labour so pursued in Hayti, instead of affording us a proof of what may be accomplished by it, is illustrative of the fact, that it is by coercion, and coercion only, that any return can be expected from the employment of capital in the cultivation of soil in our West India islands. I shall also be able to shew that Hayti presents no instance in which the cultivation of the soil is successfully carried on without the application of force to constrain the labourer : on the estates of every individual connected with

the government, all the labourers employed work under the superintendence of a military police, and it is on these properties alone that any thing resembling successful agriculture exists in Hayti. I am aware that this will excite the astonishment of persons who have been accustomed to think otherwise; but I shall state facts which cannot be controverted, even by President Boyer himself—nay, I shall produce circumstances which I have seen with the utmost surprise on his own estate; circumstances that must shew his warmest advocates, that all his boasted productions have not been obtained without the application of that system against which they loudly exclaim.

Instead of holding out an example of what might be accomplished by a people released from bondage, without first having been prepared for freedom by moral and religious instruction, I think Hayti rather forms a beacon to warn us against the dangers and difficulties by which that unhappy country has been overtaken. The present condition of Hayti, arising from the events which have taken place since the revolution, should render us exceedingly cautious how we plunge our own colonies into the same misery and calamity; by conferring on a rude and untaught people, without qualification, or without the least restraint, an uncontrolled command over themselves. However acutely we may feel for the miseries to which the West Indian slave was at one period sub-

jected, yet I cannot conceive it possible that any one can be so destitute of correct information on the subject as not to know, that at this moment the slave is in a condition far more happy, that he possesses infinitely greater comforts and enjoyments, than any class of labourers in Hayti, and that, from the judicious measures which have been already adopted by the colonial legislatures, and from others which are in contemplation, for improving the condition of the slave, it is very rational to conclude that before long slavery will only be considered as a name; and that were it to receive any other designation it would furnish no peg on which the European philanthropist might hang his declamations against slavery.

To place the slaves in the British colonies upon a footing with the free labourers in Hayti, or with the largest proportion of the people in that country, would be a work of easy accomplishment; but the effect would be, to cause them to exchange a state of comparative plenty and comfort, for one in which every species of tyranny and oppression, with their concomitants, disease and want, are most lamentably conspicuous. Whatever may be the views of the British Cabinet relative to their colonies, I should warn it to steer clear of the erroneous policy which has proved so fatal to Hayti, and should it be determined that a change should be introduced into the policy hitherto pursued with so much success, and with so much advantage in our colonial

possessions, I trust it will not be by emancipating the slave, before he is prepared for freedom by a proper moral and religious education. Let the system of slavery be gradually improved, and the slave will glide imperceptibly into a state of freedom.

It is not my intention, in this early stage of my remarks, to enter into any lengthened detail of the disunion or want of cordiality subsisting between the two classes of people in Hayti: this I shall reserve for its proper place; where it will be seen, that a very strong dissatisfaction prevails amongst the black population, which manifests itself upon almost every occasion of celebrating public events, and festivities. This acrimonious feeling evidently arises from the jealousy excited by the predominant influence of the coloured people in the government. This influence, detrimental as it may be to the good order and repose of the country, is courted and nurtured by the president, to the great danger of overthrowing the whole establishment. One or two attempts at revolt have been made by the people of the north, who were the subjects of the late Christophe, and from these efforts, although abortive, it may be inferred, that the spirit for a more extensive commotion still lurks in their minds, and that the least possible irritation would so agitate and inflame them, that the whole would be thrown into a scene of disorder, tumult, and irremediable confusion. The combinations are numerous and powerful, but

such was the extraordinary apathy of the government, that until a communication was made by an individual to Boyer, neither he nor any one of his officers had the least intimation that such proceedings were in contemplation. The want of energy visible in the government makes it obnoxious to the people, and no country like Hayti can be expected to remain long in repose and tranquillity, unless its governors possess both talent and resolution to command.

That the government of Hayti is the most inefficient and enervated of any of the modern republics cannot be denied, and I cannot see the least hope of an improvement, unless there be a complete revision of its constitution, and a new one framed, better suited to the tastes of the people, and more adapted to their present very rude state of knowledge. From the present rulers it would be vain to expect any effort which might prove beneficial to the country; any attempt to cultivate or improve the habits and morals of the people, or to promote agriculture. The members composing the present government, seem to consider the poverty and ignorance of the people, as the best safeguards of the security and permanence of their own property and power.

A recognition of the independence of Hayti by Great Britain may give some strength to the measures of its government, because the people have

called out loudly for the protection of that power, whilst they have as loudly exclaimed against the policy pursued towards France. No event in its history has excited in the republic greater abhorrence or more general murmuring, than the act of purchasing from France that which it had *de facto* possessed for twenty-one years unmolested and undisturbed; thereby at once admitting the sovereignty of that power over the island, and which sovereignty France will, at some convenient period, unquestionably assert, and that without the least fear of any inconvenient consequences arising from it; for what power can give aid to the Haytians against France, when the former have openly and formally admitted themselves to be a colony dependent upon the French crown. Whatever intercourse Englishmen may be disposed to maintain with Hayti, it is indispensable that they should use the most vigilant precaution, and exact a rigid adherence to such treaties as may have been entered into, if they would avoid certain loss; for the Haytian character, taken generally, will be found, so far from being entitled either to credit or confidence, not even to possess common honesty. Compacts with them are easily made; but a faithful adherence to agreements must not be expected;—their maxim is to break them, whenever they find it can be accomplished with advantage.

CHAPTER I.

Situation and general description of the French and Spanish divisions, previously to the Revolution in the former country.

THE island of St. Domingo, once the abode of fertility, and the scene of extraordinary political changes and events, lies in latitude $18^{\circ} 20'$ north and in longitude $68^{\circ} 40'$ west from Greenwich, having on its west the islands of Cuba and Jamaica, on its east Porto Rico, the Bahamas on its north, and bounded southerly by the Carribean Sea. Its extent has been variously stated; but Edwards, who describes it to be about 390 miles in length from east to west, seems the most correct; and it appears from late surveys to be nearly 150 miles in breadth from north to south. The Abbé Raynal has represented it at 200 leagues in length, and from 60 to 80 in breadth, but it is evident that his estimation is erroneous. Rainsford also states it to be about 450 miles in length, but from every information which I could obtain, its length does not appear to exceed 400 miles, nor its breadth 140. The reader, therefore, must look into these discrepancies, and judge between them. As it is not easy to sur-

vey a country intersected by wilds and impenetrable mountains, much is necessarily left to conjecture.

It is the most extensive, and was at one period of its history the most productive of the Antilles, and was called by the aborigines Haiti, or Highland, and by which ancient designation it is now generally known, that of St. Domingo having been abolished at the revolution. To convey an adequate idea of what this once delightful island was, is not the object of the present work; on this head it is sufficient to observe that in the richness and extent of its productions, and in its local beauties, it exceeded every other island in the western hemisphere, and that the two divisions of the east and the west, when under the respective governments of Spain and France, were considered and indeed known to be the most splendid and most important appendages to those crowns. Its plains and valleys presented the most inviting scenes from the richness of the pastures and the verdure with which they eternally abounded. Its mountains were also said to contain ores of the most valuable kind, and produce timber admirably adapted for every useful or ornamental purpose. Nothing could exceed the extreme salubrity of the whole country, nor could it be surpassed in the vast exuberance of its luscious fruits, and in those productions of the soil which became the general articles of export, and from which all the wealth and all commerce of this colony flowed.

The French division, though infinitely less extensive than the Spanish part, and not containing a third of the whole island, has been considered the most valuable spot in the western world. The Spanish division however has greater natural resources, and affords greater facilities for agricultural operations: but the very extraordinary exertions of the French planter in the culture of the soil, compensated for the want of those advantages possessed by their Spanish neighbours, who, more indolently disposed, relied on the produce of their mines, which afforded, as they imagined, greater local riches than those which could be obtained from either agriculture or commerce, forgetting that these alone furnish the wealth which can render any country really and permanently prosperous and great.

It appears from every authority, that the first colony established here by the French, was settled in the sixteenth century, having been attracted thither by the Buccaneers, who had previously obtained a footing in the island from excursions which they often made from Tortuga, for the purpose of hunting the bulls of the Spaniards. These hardy and predatory warriors attracted the French, who supplied them with such necessaries as they required, and even sent them many settlers, with arms and implements for defence and labour. The extreme fertility of the country invited them to make some efforts to gain a permanent footing in it, and by

means of intrigue coupled with a little force, they succeeded in obtaining possession of the whole of the west end, the line of which seems to have run in an oblique direction, from about Cape François on the north to Cape Rosa on the south. Having surmounted all the obstacles that presented themselves, and having overcome those difficulties which generally accompany the first attempts at colonization, or are met with in a newly discovered land, they pursued with incredible ardour and industry the culture of the soil, and the improvement of their valuable acquisition.

The Spanish court, jealous of and unable to contend with their rival colonists, submitted to France, when the two cabinets at home came to a mutual understanding and adjustment, respecting these foreign possessions. An arrangement was entered into, under which commissioners were appointed for settling the boundaries, and fixing the rights which had formed the ground of disputes between the settlers of these rival nations. The line of demarcation finally agreed upon commenced at the bay of Mansenillo on the north, dividing in its course the river Massacre; thence taking rather a westerly course, it reached an acute point at Don-don, and afterwards proceeded southerly to the river Pedernales.

This tract of country, as conceded to the French, contained about 1000 square leagues, exceedingly

irregular in its character, intersected with mountains, and having plains confined and difficult of approach, so as to make it altogether much inferior in point of natural value to even a single district of the Spanish division; having also two extreme points or capes, Cape Nicolas Mole on the north, and Cape Tiburon on the south-west extremity, in both of which the soil is less valuable, from its being so very mountainous, and from its not possessing those facilities of communication which can be obtained in other districts. Notwithstanding the disadvantages against which the first settlers had to contend, and in defiance of every local obstacle, they seemed to have been impressed with the conviction, that if a spirit of perseverance and labour could be diffused amongst them, they would ultimately be richly rewarded for all their toil, and all that anxiety and deprivation to which it appears, at their first setting out, they were unquestionably subjected. Their conclusions were just, and time shewed the correctness of the principles on which they reasoned and acted, for their colony gradually rose in estimation; and at so early a period as the year 1703, under the government of M. Auger, a native of America, and who in early life had been in a state of slavery, it had become of so much consideration to France, that the greatest possible efforts were made to extend their system of cultivation to the whole of their colonial territory. That

officer was indefatigable, it is said, in his exertions in encouraging and in stimulating the colonists in the culture of the lands, and as he had been previously governor of Guadaloupe, it is to be inferred that he possessed no ordinary skill in the business of preparing the ground for the production of those exotic and indigenous plants which became the main articles of export to the mother-country. That he was a most efficient governor all writers admit, for he had brought the state of his colony to a very high pitch of prosperity, when he died, lamented by all who had lived under his command. The plantations at this period had increased in every part, particularly in the valleys, where the soil was more congenial, and where the labour could be performed without being attended with those difficulties which impeded it in the more mountainous districts. In the western parts the cocoa-tree had begun to produce most luxuriantly, yielding great wealth to individuals, and a large revenue to the state. The sugar-cane had also arrived at great perfection, and the art of manufacturing the sugar from it had been for some time carried on with astonishing success. Coffee plantations were establishing, and the planters in every direction were vying with each other in bringing their properties into the highest possible state of cultivation.

In the year 1715, however, the island suffered a very severe calamity, and in the succeeding year

another followed, in both of which almost all the cocoa-trees perished, and considerable damage was done to every vegetable production ; and the planters, who had by this time acquired an easy, if not a competent fortune, sustained losses that only time and continued exertion could possibly repair. It will be seen, however, that a great improvement gradually followed, and that agriculture had not been neglected, for in the year 1754 the colony had advanced to a wonderful pitch of prosperity, and seems to have satisfied the wishes of the proprietors of the soil, as well as the most sanguine expectations of the government. It is said by an anonymous writer, that “ the various commodities exported from the island amounted to a million and a quarter sterling, and the imports to one million seven hundred and seventy-seven thousand five hundred and nine pounds. There were fourteen thousand white inhabitants, nearly four thousand free mulattoes, and one hundred and seventy-two thousand negroes ; five hundred and ninety-nine sugar plantations, three thousand three hundred and seventy-nine of indigo, ninety-eight thousand nine hundred and forty-six cocoa-trees, six million three hundred thousand three hundred and sixty-seven cotton plants, and about twenty-two millions of cassia-trees, sixty-three thousand horses and mules, ninety-three thousand head of horned cattle, six millions of bannana trees, upwards of one million

plots of potatoes, two hundred and twenty-six thousand of yams, and nearly three million trenches of marrioc."

From this period up to the French revolution the colony advanced still further in prosperity, every year adding to the wealth of the planters, and to the revenue of the crown. Nothing could exceed the condition into which the plantations had been brought by their owners; a steady and enlightened system of agriculture had been established, which had been productive of the most beneficial results. Every plantation, laid out with the greatest care and neatness, was so arranged as to bring every part of the soil into use in its proper order of succession—not the least particle appears to have escaped the eye of the owner, for what could not be rendered fit for the production of the cane, served either for cotton, coffee, indigo, or other plants. In the valleys surrounded by mountains, the access to which for carriages was attended with some danger, and consequently were chiefly in pasture, the verdure was astonishing. These valleys having small rivulets or streams running through them, and shaded by occasional groups of trees and shrubs, which grew spontaneously on the margins of a spring, or round any body of water that might occasionally be collected from the mountain falls, became extremely valuable for the raising of cattle for the consumption of the planters, and on this account extremely

profitable to their owners; for here the animals could graze undisturbed and cool under a meridian sun, and range unmolested, indulging in the richness of the surrounding herbage. The culture of the land for the sugar-cane at this period seems to have engaged the greatest attention of the planter, for at no time had such amazing crops been produced as in the year preceding the revolution; the soil in the plains of the north, Artibanite and the Cul de Sac, being peculiarly adapted for it, from its extreme strength and excellent quality, and from its situation, which enabled it to receive the aid of irrigation in seasons when drought prevails. The estates also appropriated to the production of sugar exhibited a degree of uniformity and order, in all the departments of plantation labour, which can scarcely be exceeded even at the present period, when the system is supposed to have become more mature, and its true principles better understood.

The coffee plantations had at this time arrived at great perfection—they were extensive, and exceedingly fruitful; for the genius and industry of the proprietors were exerted to their utmost limits in this branch of agriculture. Every property was divided and subdivided into small fields, in which the trees were planted with all that nicety and regularity which is often seen in a well regulated nursery. The pruning-knife and the hoe were regularly applied to the trees requiring to be dismembered of

their superfluous branches, and wanting nurture at their half expiring roots. The cotton and indigo plantations had also arrived at the height of excellence in planting, and it was not possible that greater abundance could have been obtained from them, than that which was usually returned at or a few years previously to the convulsion which took place. The cocoa tree was also at this time exceedingly flourishing, and much care and attention were bestowed upon its cultivation; its produce being found an article of no inconsiderable demand, and extremely profitable in the returns which it yielded the cultivator.

A better or clearer proof cannot be given of the highly improved state of agriculture at this time, than by a reference to the number of plantations which had been established, and to the quantity of produce which had been exported to France, with the value of the whole, as estimated by persons whose authority may be relied on, and who were doubtless competent judges, from having in the island filled situations which gave them opportunities of fairly estimating everything connected with the country.

Moreau St. Mery, a writer of great credit, and a native of St. Domingo, states, “ that in the year 1791 there were, in the French division alone, seven hundred and ninety-three sugar estates, seven hundred and eighty-nine cotton plantations, three

thousand one hundred and seventeen of coffee, three thousand one hundred and fifty of indigo, fifty-four cocoa manufactories, and six hundred and twenty-three smaller settlements, on which were produced large quantities of Indian corn, rice, pulse, and almost every description of vegetables required for the consumption of the people. There were also forty thousand horses, fifty thousand mules, and two hundred and fifty thousand cattle and sheep; and that the quantity of land actually in cultivation was about two million two hundred and eighty-nine thousand four hundred and eighty acres."

The quantity of produce exported from the island to France appears, by various accounts, to have been very large indeed, furnishing a very strong corroboration of the flourishing state of the colony, and of the extent to which agriculture had been carried. It would appear that not much regard was paid to other means by which the prosperity of the country might have been enhanced, the inhabitants resting solely on the culture of the soil to exalt the island in the eyes of the parent state, and to make it an appendage worthy to be cherished and protected. Mr. Edwards and others have stated the amount of exports as follows: that is to say, about one hundred and sixty-three millions four hundred thousand pounds of sugar, sixty-eight millions one hundred and fifty thousand pounds of

coffee, six millions two hundred and eighty-six thousand pounds of cotton, nine hundred and thirty thousand pounds of indigo, twenty-nine thousand hogsheads of molasses, and three hundred puncheons of rum. Walton, in his Appendix, enumerates many other articles of export besides those which I have named, and he states the quantity of each much larger, and values the whole at about six millions and ninety-four thousand two hundred and thirty pounds, English money. The same writer observes, that the value of the imports into the country about that time from France was four millions one hundred and twenty-five thousand six hundred and ten pounds sterling. At this period, also, it appears from authority, that the population amounted to about forty thousand white people, twenty-eight thousand free persons of colour, and about four hundred and fifty-five thousand slaves; and that the valuation of the whole of the plantations in culture, with the buildings, slaves, cattle, and every implement for the use of agriculture, was estimated at fourteen hundred and ninety millions of livres, or somewhat about seventy millions English money.

The Spanish division of Hayti is said to contain two-thirds of the whole, and is estimated at about three thousand one hundred and fifty square leagues, an extent of country capable of affording the means of subsistence to a population of at least seven millions of souls. In local advantages this part cer-

tainly exceeds the western division, from its soil being almost in a virgin state, and a very large proportion of its valleys and elevations never having been tilled. The indolence and inactivity inherent in the Spanish character have been displayed in all their colours in this part of St. Domingo; for although their district possessed all the natural means required to raise them to an equal pitch of splendour with their French neighbours, yet so powerful were their propensities for pleasure, and every species of amusement, that they devoted but little of their time to the improvement of their properties, and they obtained from them but little beyond a scanty supply for their own immediate wants. From every source of information that can be consulted, it appears that the Spaniards, from their earliest settlement down to the period when they finally quitted the country, depended more on their mines than on anything that possibly could be derived from either agriculture or commerce; consequently agriculture was in a backward state, and the culture of the soil made but a very slow progress: indeed, but a very small proportion of the country was in a state of tillage; the inhabitants merely paid a little attention to the natural pastures which abounded in all the plains of the east, and whose luxuriance and verdure continued throughout the whole year. In these they raised large herds of cattle, for which they found a market, not only among their neigh-

bours the French, who required a considerable supply for their estates, but they exported very large quantities to Jamaica and Cuba. To the raising of cattle, therefore, and to the occasional cutting of wood—mahogany, cedar, and a variety of other timbers for ornamental work, as well as dye-woods,—did the Spaniards devote their time, and hence did they contrive to satisfy their moderate and contracted wants, without having recourse to tillage.

It has been observed, and I think very truly, that the most important obstacle to the advancement of this part of Hayti, was the policy pursued by Spain towards her colonies. The system of government under which she ruled her transatlantic settlements seems to have been one of extreme oppression, and of unexampled rigour, and, from the earliest period of her sway, this system was most rigidly enforced in Hispâncola. There does not appear upon record any circumstance previously to the year 1700, which evinced a disposition on the part of Spain to promote the welfare of the colony, by calling forth its local resources, and by encouraging and tolerating settlers from others of their unprofitable and barren islands, in which all their energies and efforts had been fruitless and unavailing. The high state of the west end, under their prudent and more assiduous neighbours the French, whose industry and perseverance had astonished the world, and whose judicious and highly

commendable system for promoting the cultivation of their country had become the theme of much praise and admiration, seemed about this time to have produced among the Spaniards some disposition to adopt measures for insuring to the parent state a more lucrative trade from their colonies. The force of example was too powerful to be resisted, and even the Court of Madrid began about this time to devise measures which might improve, and which might call into play all those resources which this highly fertile and most congenial soil was known to possess. Governors of known prudence and patriotic zeal for the interest of their nation were selected, and sent out, with injunctions to promote the interests of agriculture, and to give a spur to commerce, by opening an intercourse with their neighbours. The wants of the French in cattle, mules, and horses, were exceedingly extensive, and offered to the Spaniards an opportunity of improving their properties, by providing a vent for the sale of their stock. It gave an impulse to industry, and the once inert and unconcerned Spanish planter became in time an active and enterprising agriculturist, shaking off that languor by which he had been previously characterized, and at length assuming a degree of animation and spirit, which enabled him to take advantage of those resources which nature had placed within his reach.

A mutual interchange and good understanding

between the two powers of France and Spain having taken place, this intercourse, become more frequent and reciprocally beneficial, continued for a series of years. In 1790, however, this most important branch of their commerce was cut off by the convulsion into which the neighbouring province was thrown. All that part of the population who dwelt on the frontiers withdrew themselves into the interior, leaving behind them their cattle, which fell into the hands of their rapacious neighbours, whose inroads caused much consternation amongst the proprietors; but their slaves, from habit or from some other powerful cause, remained unmoved and attached to them, although they had before them such strong incentives to revolt. Every appeal made by these people (and it is said, that they made innumerable ones) to the cabinet of Spain for protection against the fatal example of the French division, met with a very cold reception, if not a positive rejection. In this state of suspense and continued fear and alarm the people remained, until the disgraceful treaty of Basle gave Hispañeola to the republican government of France; and this event I cannot better describe than in the language of one of the most correct writers on this country*, whom I shall here quote as an authority which has been hitherto deemed unquestionable. Speaking of

* Walton.

this event, which occurred in the year 1795, and of the designs of the French rulers, he says, “ though busied in the plans of universal dominion on their own continent, their cabinet did not lose sight or cease to entertain a hope of again possessing colonies abroad, and they were well aware which were the most desirable. Perhaps no system of invasion had been longer or more deeply premeditated, and digested with more mysterious secrecy, than the entire subjugation of Spain and her American settlements, in which, besides the common views of aggrandizement, their constitutional enmity to the reigning family acted as a powerful stimulus. This policy was coeval with that ambition which marked the first career of the present ruler of France and the specious veil under which the hidden, but continued advances were regularly made towards the end in view, adds to the guilt of duplicity and ingratitude, when we consider that Spain has scrupulously maintained her treaty of alliance and has fulfilled the stipulations entered into in 1795, notwithstanding all the three changes that have given other names to the French government, without altering its entity, or revolutionary or destructive system ; that the cabinets of Madrid have bended to a degree of abject condescension, rather than be precipitated into a war ; that they have sacrificed the interests and inclinations of their people, and

have been driven at length into a state of non-reprisal, rather than risk a warfare with a nation they respected, and though an ally, furnishing both men and money under promises to share in the conquests made, they have been treated rather as a faithless neutral without claim, representation, or character, and thus their country has been impoverished and laid waste, and the supports of national union and energy undermined.”

Further, in continuation of this disgraceful treaty, by which Spain so abjectly submitted to surrender her colony to France, he says, “by this instrument of diplomatic intrigue and subtlety *Hispañeola* was made over unreservedly to France; the oldest subjects of the Spanish crown in the western world were thus bartered like so many sheep, and an island, not the capture of an enemy during war, and given up at its termination, but one that had descended to them as a primitive right, and had formed the glory of the preceding monarchs, who saw it discovered and settled. When possession was given in further aggravation of the Spanish natives, the transfer was received by Toussaint at the head of the intrusive settlers of one division of the island, with whom the former had previously and generously shared their territory; in short by a horde of emancipated slaves to whom the French republic had given equality, consistence, and power, and who now came to erect a new

standard on the spot consecrated by the labours and ashes of Columbus, and long revered as an object of national pride.”

“ In justice to the Dominican people it may be said, that none of the Spanish settlements possess more of the *amor patriæ* which ought to distinguish loyal subjects: they received the news as a thunderbolt, and the country presented an universal scene of lamentation. They appealed to the humanity of their sovereign, but without effect, and then had recourse to remonstrances.”

Receiving no answer to their prayers or to their remonstrances, the people were left in a state bordering on despondency, with the only alternative of leaving their native land, or of swearing allegiance to a power in whom they could not confide, and which they had been taught to detest. Emigration therefore was determined on, and all orders—nuns, friars, clergy, and men of property and influence—with their families and their slaves, embarked for Cuba, Porto Rico, and the Spanish main, leaving behind them their possessions, to seek a shelter, and to find homes and occupations, in a country in which they might be protected by laws to which they had been accustomed, and submit to a government which they had been taught to respect. The extent of this emigration was considerable, and is said to have amounted to one third of the population; and it is evident from a subsequent

census that this was not an exaggeration, and that so large a proportion of the people absolutely left the country, abandoning their abodes and much wealth rather than submit to a people whom they hated as the usurpers of their possessions.

In the years 1789 and 1790, about which time the first disturbances among the slaves in the French part of the island commenced, it appears the Spanish division contained about one hundred and fifty thousand souls or upwards; but by a subsequent census taken immediately after the cession to the French, and after the spirit for emigration had in some measure subsided, there remained only about one hundred thousand of all descriptions, a very strong proof of the detestation in which the Spaniards held this treaty, which assigned them over as subjects of the republican government of France. It is very evident, however, whatever impressions this arrangement might have made on the Spanish colonists, that it was one dictated by the rulers in France, and therefore accepted from necessity, and not from choice. The infamous Godoy, Prince of Peace (which high sounding title was confirmed by this treaty) was the leading personage in its negotiation, and being secretly leagued with the French ministry, became a willing instrument in consigning this bright and valuable appendage of the Spanish crown to the more designing and crafty schemes of the French cabinet, which had been from the beginning of their ambi-

tious aim at universal dominion, not unmindful of the advantages that were to be derived from colonial possessions. When it is seen that the mistaken and weak policy, as well as the pusillanimity of the Spanish cabinet, caused so great a sacrifice as the dismemberment of their most valuable colony, it becomes a matter of no astonishment that the people should relax in their efforts to aid the means and resources of their parent state, by any exertions, in the cultivation of their lands, beyond what might be requisite for their own support. As this neglect and heedless inattention to their prosperity had been for a series of years observable, and as every incentive to industry was checked by the measures of the crown, it is not to be wondered at that this division of the island did not advance at the same rate as that which was under the dominion of France. However manifest the declension of the colony was to Spain, she never made any movements, nor adopted any means indicating a desire to revive the drooping energies of the colonists, and reinstate them in their former easy circumstances and affluence. If the cabinet of Madrid had had recourse to those wise plans which would have promoted the cause of agriculture and commerce, instead of becoming a calm and unconcerned spectator of the decline of both, this colony might still have remained the most brilliant gem in the Spanish crown. A people who had, from the example of their neighbours, and by

an impulse the most surprising, been roused from a state of lethargy and inactivity to great exertions in the culture of the soil, in the breeding of cattle, and in commercial enterprise, might have exalted their country to the highest possible state of prosperity, had their efforts been seconded by the regulations of a wise government, and had that protection been given to them to which they were surely entitled; but instead of such support and protection, instead of being watched over and guarded by their parent state, their prayers, their petitions, and entreaties, were unattended to, and they were given up as a prey to their rebellious and uncivilized neighbours, who used every exertion to throw their country into a state of anarchy and confusion. The individual and unsupported energies of the colonists, however, were roused by the alarming predicament into which they had been thrown, through the apathy and supineness of the cabinet of Spain, and they effectually stopped the incursions of the pillagers for a time, prevented the destruction of their towns and plantations, and finally, by their firmness and perseverance, saved their properties from the devastations which had destroyed those of the western division.

To the astonishment of the world, the slaves, as I have before remarked, adhered with extraordinary fidelity to the cause of their masters, and evinced no disposition to become participators in the work

of rebellion, nor to enrich themselves by the spoils obtained by plunder, rapine, and every kind of predatory warfare. Although the example to throw off the yoke of slavery was constantly before them, few were the instances in which a slave joined the insurgents. Such an attachment on the part of the slave towards his master, however, is not to be wondered at, when it is known, that the Spaniards were kind, indulgent, and liberal owners, always attentive to their wants, and alive to their comforts; seldom inflicting punishment, except for flagrant acts of insubordination and theft, but treating them with a leniency and humanity which softened the rigours of slavery, and left it to be known only by name.

Notwithstanding the enmity which always existed between the two colonies, a smuggling trade was carried on, which, although not very extensive, was exceedingly productive to the Spaniards, as it took off part of their horned cattle, mules, horses, &c., and in return for which they received the products and manufactures of Europe, and slaves, which they could not obtain by the regular course of importation, on any thing like the same moderate or favourable terms. It is stated, that the French purchased annually upwards of twenty-five thousand head of horned cattle and about two thousand five hundred mules and horses; and that the Spaniards also transmitted upwards of half a million of dollars in specie during the year, for the purchase of goods,

implements of agriculture, and negroes. Large shipments of mahogany and dye-woods found their way to Spain and different parts of Europe, and the United States, and indirectly to England: and a considerable intercourse existed with the islands of Porto Rico, Cuba, and Jamaica, to which latter two islands cattle were exported, and mahogany and dye-woods found a market in Jamaica more advantageous than any that could be found in Europe, owing to their being able to procure their returns in a more direct way than through the mother-country or any of the European states.

The commerce with Porto Rico and the Spanish main was also productive of some profit to the people of St. Domingo. The advantages accruing to the former arose from the facilities of smuggling, by which the enormous duties on foreign European goods of thirty-four per cent. in most cases were saved; and these goods could be purchased in St. Domingo on more moderate terms, from having been illicitly obtained from the French part of the island.

The trade to the United States was also of no little importance; for the vessels of that country took large quantities of mahogany, hides, some coffee, and a little dye-wood, in return for the cargoes which they brought thither, consisting of flour, beef, pork, butter, salted herrings, and dried cod-fish, with some East India goods, and various descrip-

tions of lumber of America, more useful and easy in working for buildings than the hard wood of the country. The aggregate value of the exports and imports of this part of the island I have seen nowhere correctly stated: it is very evident, however, from the various accounts which I have seen, that it was infinitely less than the aggregate of the French part; and this may be safely confided in from the extremely fertile state of the one, when compared with the uncultivated condition of the other; from the industrious, the assiduous, and enterprising spirit, so characteristic of the French colonist, aided by the judicious measures of the cabinet of France, which sought to protect and encourage the agriculture and commerce of her colonies, whilst the Spaniards of the eastern division were left to pursue both their agricultural and commercial avocations under every species of discouragement and restraint. The energy displayed by one government, and the very relaxed system pursued by the other, accounts for the flourishing state of one part of this rich colony, whilst its rival was steeped in poverty: nothing, therefore, is left for conjecture as to the cause of so great a contrast; and both having subsequently been shaken by the effects of those pernicious doctrines so generally propagated at the Revolution, little is to be seen of the antecedent state of either, and chaos, ignorance, and indolence have superseded order, light, and industry.

Such was the state of the island at and during the two or three succeeding years of the revolution, as related by several writers, and confirmed by information obtained from individuals now residing in the country, who were present during the troubles which agitated and destroyed it, and reduced them from the height of affluence and peace into misery, and oftentimes into want—from them, much, of course, was to be elicited; and although I thought it a matter of prudence and a necessary caution, not to rely too implicitly on their communications, yet I always found them justly entitled to my confidence, on the fullest investigation. I never had a cause to question their veracity. Their account of the scenes which took place during the early stages and progress of the revolution, accords with the statements of others who have described them, and I have not been able to discover any discrepancies between them.

CHAPTER II.

Cause of the revolution in the colony.—People of colour in France.—Their proceedings.—League with the society of Amis des Noirs.—Ogé's rebellion.—His defeat and death.—Conduct of the proprietors and planters.—Consequences of it.

IT has been very erroneously thought by some persons, who feel interested in the fate of the slave population of the West Indies, or at all events they have, with no little industry, propagated the impression, that the revolution in Hayti begun with the revolt of the blacks, when it is evident, from the very best authors and from the testimony of people now living, who were present during its opening scenes, that such was not the fact, and that the slaves remained perfectly tranquil for two years after the celebrated "Declaration of Rights" was promulgated in France. Such persons give themselves but little trouble in searching the history of the island—they are satisfied with the report of others, who may be equally uninformed with themselves; and thus it is that they imbibe ideas and notions of the wonderful capacities of the negro population, who could have commenced, and so effectually carried

themselves through a struggle for freedom, without, as they allege, the aid of any other more enlightened or more powerful auxiliary. It requires no observation of mine to shew that the first symptom of disorder shewed itself among that class of people in the colony denominated, at the time, *Sang-mêlées*, or *Gens de Couleur*, or, as termed in the British colonies, mulattoes, who from their numbers formed a very powerful body, and not being countenanced by the whites, became in time inveterately opposed to them : many of them, natives of the colony and of the other French islands, were residing in France at the time of the Revolution, and these consisted of persons who had been sent thither in early life for their education, together with others who possessed considerable property, as well as some talent and intelligence. At this period also, from an extraordinary prejudice that prevailed in France against the inhabitants of the colonies, arising from an aversion to the principles of slavery, and which was much encouraged by the denunciation against everything having the least appearance of despotism, a society was established, denominated "*Amis des Noirs*" (Friends of the Blacks), which aimed at the subversion of the government, and called for an immediate abolition of the slave-trade, as well as a general emancipation of all those who were at the time living in a state of slavery.

"With these people" (meaning the men of colour

in France), says a writer on this subject, “the society of Amis des Noirs formed an intimate connection. Their personal appearance excited pity, and, cooperating with the spirit of the times and the representations of those who deeply sympathized upon principles of humanity with their condition, all ranks of people became clamorous against the white colonists, and their total annihilation was threatened.” Not long after the formation of this union of feeling and sentiment between the friends of the blacks and the men of colour in France, the national assembly promulgated their famous declaration of rights, an act certainly contemplating the destruction of all order, and having an evident tendency to excite the lower classes of the people into every species of insubordination and general ferment; one of its leading and most important clauses being, that “*all men are born and continue free and equal as to their rights.*”

The society of Amis des Noirs, aided by a corresponding institution in London, together with the united body of the coloured people in France, lost no time in sending out this very celebrated declaration, and in disseminating its principles throughout the whole island; their efforts were not unavailing, for the mulattoes, conscious that the French nation were favourable towards their designs of demanding a restitution of their rights, and the full and unqualified enjoyment of those privileges hitherto con-

fined to the white colonists, had recourse to arms, and appeared in bodies for the purpose of awing the provincial assemblies into concession; but their number not being great, they were in the onset easily subdued. It is said, however, that notwithstanding this check to their progress, the assemblies were much disposed to concede to the demands of the mulattoes; but in no instance could they think of permitting those white inhabitants to participate in these privileges, who had in any way cooperated with them. Several of the civil officers of the colony and magistrates declaimed against slavery, and openly avowed themselves supporters of the declaration of the national assembly of the mother-country; they were arrested by the provincial assemblies, and committed to prison, and such was the irritation and fury of the mob, that Mons. Beaudierre, a respectable magistrate at Petit Goane, was taken out by force, and, in spite of the municipality and other powers, put to death. In some cases the governor successfully interposed, and those who were most obnoxious to the people were conveyed out of the colony by secret means. During all these outrages, there is no account upon record of the negroes taking any part, and the fact seems to be established, that at this period they were quite tranquil and unmoved, although their several proprietors were concerned either for or against the measures from which the agitations sprung.

It appears that the governor of the colony had lost a great deal of his popularity, and consequently of his power, by his interposition ; for a general colonial assembly, convoked in January 1790 by order from the king, determined that his instructions were imperfect and inapplicable, and the people therefore proceeded on a plan of their own, and changed both the time and the place at which the assembly should be held. Nothing could have emanated from the deliberations of the body convoked by this determination of the people, for the discontented and confused state of the colony being soon known in the mother-country, and an apprehension having arisen that the island was likely soon to be declared independent, the national assembly, in March 1790, came to the following decision : “ That it never was the intention of the assembly to comprehend the interior government of the colonies in the constitution which they had framed for the mother-country, or to subject them to laws which were incompatible with their local establishments ; they therefore authorize the inhabitants of each colony to signify to the national assembly their sentiments and wishes concerning the plan of interior legislation and commercial arrangement which would be most conducive to their prosperity.” Then followed a resolution, “ That the national assembly would not cause any innovation to be made, directly or indirectly, in any system of

commerce in which the colonies were already concerned." *

The people of colour and the society of Amis des Noirs were, as it might have been anticipated, thrown into considerable alarm by the promulgation of a decree of so ambiguous a character, and no little surprise and consternation followed its appearance in the island. It was construed into an acquiescence in the further continuance of the slave-trade; it was also conceived to confer upon the colonists the power of settling and affixing their colonial constitutions, and to absolve them from their allegiance to the French crown.

The first general assembly of the island which was convoked after these decrees had been received, and had excited the astonishment of the people, was held at St. Marc on the 16th of April 1790. Their deliberative functions commenced with a discussion upon the hardships to which the people of colour were subjected under the military system of the colony, and it was determined, that on no subsequent occasion should they be required to perform more duty than was usually exacted from the whites.

An inquiry into the abuses alleged to prevail in the colonial courts of judicature, and the discussion of a new plan of colonial government, were the

* Anonymous.

principal subjects which occupied the attention of the assembly until the end of May, when it was adjourned or prorogued.

M. Paynier was at this time governor-general of St. Domingo: he had neither the capacity nor the disposition required for administering the affairs of the colony at such a period. Instead of being actuated with the desire of conciliating the parties opposed to each other, he secretly gave every possible aid and encouragement to the supporters of ancient despotism. The appearance of Colonel Mauduit, however, a man of some talent and energy, effected a change; for he soon acquired much influence over the governor-general, and prevented the coalition which was about to take place between the assembly and the mulattoes; and declaring himself the protector of the latter, he speedily gained over to his interest the greater part of that class of people. The planters at this time, too, were in an undecided state, wavering in their opinions, and fixed to no measures likely to preserve the tranquillity of the island, and there was not one of their body capable of impressing them with a due sense of the condition into which they were likely to be precipitated by their want of energy and decision. Forming as they did a numerous class of the inhabitants, had they been unanimous in their opinions, and united in their views, the repose of the colony would in all probability have been preserved. Such not being

the case, however, and some of the provincial assemblies making efforts to counteract the measures of the general one, a civil war seemed likely to be the result of so much diversity of sentiment. The decree of the general colonial assembly of the 28th of May was indicative of an approaching convulsion, which before long might be expected to burst forth; the preamble to this decree exhibited sentiments which seemed to breathe a spirit hostile to the peace of the people. The articles themselves assume it as a branch of the prerogative of the crown to confirm or annul the acts of the colonial legislature at pleasure. These articles are important, and I shall detail them as they have been given by others.

“ First. The legislative authority, in every thing which relates to the internal concerns of the colony (*régime intérieur*), is vested in the assembly of its representatives, which shall be called ‘ The General Assembly of the French Part of St. Domingo.’

“ Secondly. No act of the legislative body, in what relates to the internal concerns of the colony, shall be considered *as a law definitive*, unless it may be made by the representatives of the French part of St. Domingo, freely and legally chosen, and confirmed by the king.

“ Thirdly. In cases of urgent necessity, a legislative decree of the general assembly, in what relates to the internal concerns of the colony, shall

be considered as a law provisional. In all such cases the decree shall be notified forthwith to the governor-general, who, within ten days after such notification, shall cause it to be published and enforced, or transmit to the general assembly his observations thereon.

“ Fourthly. The necessity of the case, on which the execution of such provisional decree is to depend, shall be a separate question, and be carried in the affirmative by a majority of two-thirds of the general assembly; the names and numbers being taken down (*prises par l'appel nominal*).

“ Fifthly. If the governor-general shall send down his observations on any such decree, the same shall be entered in the journals of the general assembly, who shall then proceed to revise the decree, and consider the observations thereon, in three several sittings. The votes for confirming or annulling the decree shall be given in the words Yes or No, and a minute of the proceedings shall be signed by the members present, in which shall be enumerated the votes on each side of the question, and if there appears a majority of two-thirds for confirming the decree, it shall be immediately enforced by the governor-general.

“ Sixthly. As every law ought to be founded on the consent of those who are to be bound by it, the French part of St. Domingo shall be allowed to propose regulations concerning commercial arrange-

ments, and the system of mutual connexion (rapports commerciaux, et autres rapports communs), and the decrees which the national assembly shall make in all such cases, *shall not be enforced in the colony, until the general assembly shall have consented thereto.*

“ Seventhly. In cases of pressing necessity, the importation of articles for the support of the inhabitants shall not be considered as any breach of the system of commercial regulations between St. Domingo and France; provided that the decrees to be made in such cases by the general assembly shall be submitted to the revision of the governor-general, under the same conditions and modifications as are prescribed in articles three and five.

“ Eighthly. Provided also, that every legislative act of the general assembly executed provisionally, in cases of urgent necessity, shall be transmitted forthwith for the royal sanction. And if the king shall refuse his consent to any such act, its execution shall be suspended as soon as the king's refusal shall be legally notified to the general assembly.

“ Ninthly. A new general assembly shall be chosen every two years, and none of the members who have served in the former assembly shall be eligible in the new one.

“ Tenthly. The general assembly decree that the preceding articles, as forming part of the constitution of the French colony in St. Domingo, shall be

immediately transmitted to France for the acceptance of the national assembly and the king. They shall likewise be transmitted to all the parishes and districts of the colony, and be notified to the governor-general."

It was not likely that a decree, the articles of which were thus opposed to the maintenance of order, could exact the acquiescence and submission of the people, and lead them to an approval of that which seemed to aim at the destruction of all subordination. Serious apprehensions arose as to the measures which would be adopted and pursued at this juncture, to avert the impending storm which was expected at no distant period to burst forth.

It was imagined, and was a received opinion, that the "declaring of the colony an independent state, in imitation of the English American provinces", was certain, and every effort was made to avert such a proceeding. No obedience to the general assembly could be enforced. The inhabitants of Cape François were the first to set the example of renouncing all respect for that body, and of calling upon the governor-general to dissolve them. With this request he instantly complied, charging the general assembly with a design of undermining the peace of the colony, by forming projects of independency, contrary to the voice of the colonists; he even charged them with having been accessories or instigators of the mutiny of the crew of one of the

king's ships, and pronouncing them traitors to their king and country, he declared that he should take the most prompt and effective measures for bringing them to that punishment for which their treachery so loudly called.

An attempt was made to arrest the committee of the western provincial assembly, and a force under M. Mauduit was sent for that purpose, but he failed in effecting his object, for the members, hearing of his approach, collected about four hundred of the national guard for their defence, and M. Mauduit retired after a skirmish or two, without any other advantage than the capture of the national colours.

The general assembly being apprised of this attack, immediately summoned the people to the support and protection of their representatives. The northern provincial assembly adhered to the governor-general, and, to oppose the progress of his opponents, they sent him all the troops stationed in that quarter, together with an additional force of about two hundred mulattoes. The western province collected a much greater force, and everything seemed to indicate a sanguinary civil war, when an event occurred which for a time averted all those unhappy results that would inevitably have taken place, had the opposing parties come in contact.

Most unexpectedly, at this momentous juncture, for the purpose of trying the effect of a personal appeal to the national assembly of France, the general

assembly of the island determined on a voyage to Europe. About one hundred members, all that remained of their body, from the effects of sickness and desertion, embarked on board the *Leopard* (that very ship, the crew of which had declared themselves in their interest a very short time previously) on the 8th of August, and took their departure, hailed with the warmest acclamations of the populace, who could not restrain their admiration at so extraordinary an act of devotion to the good of their country. It is said, that “tears of sensibility and affection were shed at their departure by all classes of people, and the parties in arms appeared mutually disposed to submit their differences to the king and the national assembly.”

Immediately after this storm had subsided, every effort was made by the governor-general, Paynier, to restore confidence and tranquillity amongst the people, and for some time, there was a strong indication of the peace of the colony being once more established; but the designs of the people of colour in France, abetted by the society of *Amis des Noirs*, at the head of which were some of the most violent of the revolutionary characters of France, destroyed all their hopes, and every species of anarchy and confusion was anticipated from the proceedings of these disseminators of the pernicious doctrine of equality and the rights of man.

It was at this period that the first mulatto rebellion took place, at the head of which was the famous Ogé, the protégé and disciple of La Fayette and Robespierre, a young man about thirty years of age, and a native of the northern part of St. Domingo. He had been educated in France at the expense of his mother, a woman of property living near Cape François; having been admitted to the meetings of the society of Amis des Noirs, he had imbibed all their principles, and had become enthusiastic in demanding an equality of rights and privileges for his coloured brethren. Encouraged by the society, and the revolutionary leaders, he left France for the purpose of instigating his fellow colonists of colour to take up arms in the assertion of their claims. To give him something like an appearance of military command, the society purchased for him the rank of lieutenant-colonel in the army of one of the German states. To conceal his designs from the king and the national assembly, he made a circuitous voyage by North America; but his object was known before he left France, and intimation was sent out to the governor-general that he had embarked for St. Domingo, and that his scheme was to excite his coloured brethren to arms. A description of his person, and I believe a portrait also, were transmitted for the better discovery of him on his arrival; but notwithstanding every precaution, he

landed secretly, and the circumstance remained unknown, until some weeks afterwards he wrote to the governor, reviling him for his proceedings, and in the name of all the mulattoes, of which he declared himself to be the protector, demanding in the most contumelious language the immediate execution of all the statutes of the Code Noir, and that in all times to come there should be no distinction, as to rights and privileges, between the whites and the other inhabitants of the island. To give a greater force as he thought to his demand, he vauntingly stated, that unless the governor-general acceded to his propositions, he should assert them by the force of arms. Ogé, however, was somewhat premature in his calculations of support and aid in the carrying into effect the object of his voyage; for although some considerable time had elapsed from his landing, and he had the assistance of his brothers, who were tainted with the same love of insubordination and tumult, he never could collect at any one time more than from two to three hundred to join him in his cause. He encamped his followers near the Grand Rivière, and it is said, that his brothers and another chief, Chevane, instigated their people to commit many excesses, and at times murdered the unoffending inhabitants in the vicinity, with the most shocking cruelty, whenever they declined to join in their proceedings. Instances were many, in which whole families were murdered, from the circumstance of a

father, or even a brother, refusing to take up arms to favour their cause.

Supported by so small a body, and no simultaneous movement taking place in any other part of the colony, the career of Ogé and his associates was not likely to be of any long duration. Steps were immediately taken by the governor to suppress the revolt, and to bring the leaders to trial, if it were found practicable to apprehend them. Troops and the Cape militia were sent to oppose them, when a skirmish ensued in which many of the rebels fell, and some were taken prisoners. Ogé escaped with Chevane; but as it was known that they had fled into the Spanish territory, they were demanded by the successor of Peynier, M. Blanchelande (the former having resigned his command, and embarked for Europe,) who brought them to trial in March 1791, and they were condemned: Ogé and Chevane to be broken on the wheel, and his brother and some of his followers to be hanged. The fortitude of Chevane never forsook him to the last, and he met his fate with extraordinary resolution and courage; but Ogé exhibited the greatest pusillanimity, supplicating in the most abject manner that mercy might be extended to him. It appears that a respite was granted to him, in consideration of his promise to make the most important discoveries were his life spared. He made a full confession before commissioners appointed for that pur-

pose, and in that confession was detailed the whole plan which the coloured people had devised to excite the negro population to open rebellion.

It seemed a case of peculiar hardship, if not of great injustice, and breach of all faith and honour, that after the unfortunate and deluded man had made such important disclosures, and had informed the governor of the whole of their designs, by which their further progress might be defeated, his life should be sacrificed; mercy having been held out as the price of his confession, it should have been extended to him, for this he had unquestionably, upon every principle of justice, a right to expect and to demand. Why it should not have been granted to him, no reason has been assigned. He was executed immediately after, and at the fatal spot he shewed neither the firmness, fortitude, nor the mind of a brave man suffering in that cause of which he had been the leader.

The proceedings of the government with respect to the revolt of Ogé, and the very unjust execution of the latter, excited great animosity between the whites and the people of colour, the latter of whom had collected in large bodies in various parts. In the western and southern districts they formed encampments, and displayed a determination to resist the oppression and the unjust decrees of the governor. At Jeremie, and at Aux Cazes in particular, a most formidable body had collected, well

armed and accoutred, and shewed a great desire to come in contact with the government troops. It has been generally admitted that Mauduit, who commanded the troops of the government, was in secret conference with their leaders, and that on several occasions he appeared among them singly, and consulted with them, advising them not to desist from their purpose, but to move forward with energy and perseverance. That he did this traitorously, is evident, for having obtained intelligence of the whole of their plans through this ruse, he availed himself of it for the purpose of defeating them, and as it afterwards turned out, the mulattoes were dispersed and obliged to seek refuge in any place where it was not likely that they could be known or discovered.

The members of the colonial assembly who had gone to France for the purpose of laying their complaints at the foot of the throne, were not received with much favour; on the contrary, having appeared at the bar of the national assembly they were dismissed with considerable disappointment and chagrin. The report of the committee appointed to examine their claims, displays no little disapprobation of the proceedings of the general colonial assembly. It concludes by saying, “that all the pretended decrees and acts of the said colonial assembly should be reversed and pronounced utterly null and of no effect; that the said assembly should be de-

clared dissolved, and its members rendered ineligible and incapable of being delegated in future to the colonial assembly of St. Domingo; that testimonies of approbation should be transmitted to the northern provincial assembly, to Colonel Mauduit and the regiment of Port-au-Prince, for resisting the proceedings at St. Marc's; that the king should be requested to give orders for the forming a new colonial assembly on the principles of the national decree of the 8th of March 1790, and instructions of the 28th of the same month; finally, that the *ci-devant* members, then in France, should continue in a state of arrest, until the national assembly might find time to signify its further pleasure concerning them."

Nothing could exceed the consternation which this decree excited throughout the colony, and the indignation of the people was manifest from one extremity of it to the other. To have called another general colonial assembly would have been an act of impossibility, for the people in many districts absolutely refused to return other representatives, declaring those that were under arrest in France to be the only legal ones, and that they would not proceed to another election.

The national guards, who had for some time felt, with no little mortification, the insult offered them by Mauduit, who had previously carried off their colours, evinced a disposition to resent the affront,

and to refuse all further adherence to the cause in which they had enlisted; and they were soon after joined in their revolt by the very regiment of which Mauduit was the commander, tearing the white cockade from their hats, and indignantly refusing obedience to him. Discovering the error into which he had fallen, he offered to restore the national colours, and appealed to them for protection against insult, which these faithless wretches pledged. But because he would not *stoop to the humiliation of begging pardon of the national guards on his knees*, he was, notwithstanding this pledge, on the day appointed for the ceremony of restoring the colours, suddenly pierced by the bayonets of those very soldiers whom on innumerable occasions he had so kindly and so liberally treated. The other troops who happened to be present at this most dastardly and inhuman act, could not witness it without an attempt to revenge themselves on the perpetrators; they were however restrained from effecting their intention, and only compelled them to lay down their arms, when they were sent off prisoners to France, there to receive that punishment which such an enormity most justly deserved.

About this period the accounts of the fatal end of Ogé had arrived in Paris, an event that caused an amazing sensation amongst the advocates of the people of colour and the society of Amis des Noirs; it brought forward the Abbe Gregoire, the staunch

friend of the former, who, with extraordinary eloquence and great warmth, claimed the benefit which the instructions of March 1790 gave to them. After a violent address from Robespierre, who said, “Perish the colonies rather than sacrifice one iota of our principles”, the national assembly confirmed the decree of the 15th of May, 1791, which enacted, “that the people of colour resident in the French colonies should be allowed the privileges of French citizens, and, among others, those of having votes in the choice of representatives, and of being eligible to seats both in the parochial and colonial assemblies.”

This decree, on being received in the colony, excited no little sensation; the greatest indignation was manifested by the white people in every quarter, but still they refrained from acts of hostility to the measures of the mother-country, under the hope that when the new colonial assembly, which was to meet at Leogane on the 9th of August, entered upon its legislative functions, it would without doubt afford them that redress which they so anxiously desired.

The mulattoes, no doubt, expected that a most serious opposition would be given to this decree, as the governor, M. Blanchelande, had assured the provincial assembly of the north, “that he would suspend the execution of this obnoxious decree whenever it should come to him properly authenticated”;

they accordingly assembled in large bodies throughout the whole colony, and displayed a determination to enforce by arms the concession of those privileges to which, under the decree of the national assembly, they asserted they were entitled.

Here, it will be perceived, the first serious symptoms of tumult and insubordination appeared, not from any revolt of the slave population, but from the unhappy interference of the national assembly of France, influenced by the supporters and advocates of the people of colour, and the society of *Amis des Noirs*. Had this interference been declined by the mother-country, and had the colonial assembly been invested with the sole legislative power of framing regulations for the internal government of the island, all those lamentable scenes which subsequently followed would have been averted, and the colony would have preserved its peace and repose, and have proceeded on, in its highly rich and cultivated condition, to the great advantage of the proprietors, to the enhancement of the revenues of the parent state, and without, in any way, oppressing the slave cultivators or increasing the burthens under which they were said to labour.

At the period of this narrative to which we have now arrived, the effects of the Revolution in France had made a very sensible impression on the whites, as well as on the people of colour; and it has been a matter of no little astonishment, that during the

disputes which so unhappily existed, and whilst the adherents of one party were committing acts of hostility against the other, the slave population should have remained passive observers of the contest between their respective masters, and in no instance, I believe, did they fly to their succour and support. The proprietors and planters of all denominations had arrived at a very high state of affluence, their plantations were extensive, in a high state of cultivation; thus possessing a soil rich and productive in a climate particularly favourable for cultivation, their wealth scarcely knew any limits. But unfortunately their manners and habits became relaxed and depraved in proportion as they advanced in affluence and prosperity. Proud, austere, and voluptuous, they often committed acts which humanity must condemn; and in the season of agitation and disappointment, when the contending factions at home and abroad were endeavouring to undermine them, they perhaps were led to the infliction of excessive punishments, and to practise an unusual degree of severity in exacting labour from their slaves. Sensual pleasures had also, at this time, become so prevalent as to excite very general disgust.

The mass of society had become so depraved, that vice in every shape was gloried in, whilst virtue was scarcely known; it cannot therefore be a matter of much surprise, that the rude, untaught, and unlettered slave, just emerging from his savage customs,

should be led by example to imbibe the vicious habits, and indulge the loose and ungovernable propensities which characterized his master. Upon the creole slave example made an instant impression, whilst the newly imported African, slow to observe, was only led into excesses by the craft and persuasion of his creole fellow bondsman. Example, therefore, most unquestionably suggested the extraordinary cruelties which in the spirit of revenge were inflicted by these infuriated people, instigated by the mulattoes in the first instance for the more certain enforcing of their claims to the privileges which the decree of the 15th of May, 1791, conferred upon them. In all these disputes the females of the colony also bore a conspicuous part; entering into all the views and feelings of their male companions, they displayed an unparalleled degree of enthusiasm for the cause in which their husbands, fathers and brothers had respectively engaged: forgetting their sex, and lost to the softer feelings of female nature, they furiously flew to the standards of their party, and by gesture and menace shewed that they were ready to meet the fate which seemed likely to fall on their friends.

I cannot better illustrate the characters of the planters and the slave population at this period, than by the description given of them by Rainsford in his History of St. Domingo, who must have been conversant with them from having been a sojourner

in the colony under circumstances of great danger, and whose experience, arising from general intercourse, must enable him to be a very competent judge. He says of them : “ Flushed with opulence and dissipation, the majority of the planters in St. Domingo had arrived at a state of sentiment the most vitiated, and manners equally depraved ; while injured by an example so contagious, the slaves had become more dissolute than those of any British island. If the master was proud, voluptuous, and crafty, the slave was equally vicious, and often riotous ; the punishment of one was but the consequent of his own excesses, but that of the other was often cruel and unnatural. The proprietor would bear no rival in his parish, and would not bend even to the ordinances of justice. The creole slaves looked upon the newly imported Africans with scorn, and sustained in turn that of the mulattoes, whose complexion was browner, while all were kept at a distance from an intercourse with the whites ; nor did the boundaries of sex, it is painful to observe, keep their wonted distinction from the stern impulses which affect men. The European ladies too often participated in the austerity and arrogance of their male kindred, while the jet black beauty among slaves, though scarcely a native of the island, refused all commerce with those who could not boast the same distinction with herself.”

CHAPTER III.

First revolt of the slaves in 1791.—Their ravages.—Decree of the national assembly 4th of April 1792.—Santhonax and Polverel.—Their secret agency.—Encourage the slaves.—Their declaration of freedom to the slaves.—Consequences arising from it.—Character of the slaves.—Disabilities of the coloured people.

IN the preceding chapter I have sought to discover if the first cause of the revolt of the slaves in Hayti proceeded from any hatred towards their proprietors, or if it were excited by the intrigues of the contending parties, who were each attempting to gain over that class in favour of their cause; and I find that the result of my investigation of the subject is in favour of the latter supposition. From facts that appear to me undeniable I have come to the conclusion, that unless the national assembly of France had made an attempt to destroy that principle of governing the colony which had previously been adopted, and which before the Revolution had been sanctioned by every person connected with it, the slave population would have remained until this day peaceable and tranquil observers of passing events, unmindful of their being in bondage, because under that bondage they had no wants, and in that state,

whatever may be the opinion of mankind, they had no care beyond that of their daily labour, to which they felt it was no hardship to submit; for there does not appear an instance in which it exceeded the ordinary work of any labourer within the tropics.

The revolt of the slaves, therefore, I take leave to say, did not proceed from any severity or great oppression on the part of their proprietors, but from the proceedings of the parties who at different periods were striving for a preponderating power in the colony:—of the whites who aimed at the preservation of their privileges, and resisted all innovation; and of the people of colour, who made every possible effort to be admitted into the same sphere, and to the enjoyment of those rights which Gregoire and his revolutionary colleagues were willing to concede to them. To these causes, and to these alone, as it will appear to every unbiassed reader, are to be attributed all those lamentable scenes which subsequently ensued, and to which the human mind cannot turn its attention without experiencing those painful sensations which are excited by the ravages of civil warfare and rebellion.

The first act of open rebellion among the slaves appears to have occurred in the vicinity of the Cape on or about the 23d of August 1791, on the plantation Noé, situated in the parish of Acub. The principal ringleaders murdered the white inhabitants, whilst the other slaves finished the work of de-

vastation, by demolishing the works and setting fire to the dwellings, huts, and other places contiguous to them.

They were joined by the negroes from other estates in the neighbourhood, upon all of which similar tragedies were performed, and desolation seemed likely to spread through the whole plains of the north. The barbarity which marked their progress exceeded description; an indiscriminate slaughter of the whites ensued, except in instances where some of the females were reserved for a more wretched doom, being made to submit to the brutal lusts of the most sanguinary wretches that ever disgraced humanity. Cases are upon record, where the most amiable of the female sex were first brought forth to see their parents inhumanly butchered, and were afterwards compelled to submit to the embraces of the very villain who acted as their executioner. The distinction of age had no effect on these ruthless savages, for even girls of twelve and fourteen years were made the objects of satiating their lust and revenge. Nothing could exceed the consternation of the white people; and the lamentations of the unhappy women struck every one with horror. Such a scene of massacre has scarcely been heard of, as that which accompanied the commencement of the rebellion in the north.

Some opposition was made to their progress by a few militia and troops of the line, which M. De

Tonzard collected for the purpose; not indeed, with the expectation of effectually dispersing them, but of enabling the inhabitants of the city of Cape François to put themselves in such a state of defence as might save them from that destruction which seemed to await them. The citizens flew to arms, and the national guards, with the seamen from the ships, were mustered, and ready to receive the rebels should they make an attempt upon the city.

There was in the city at the time, a large body of free mulattoes, on whom the lower order of whites looked with a suspicious eye, as being in some way the authors or fomenters of the revolt; these were also enrolled in the militia, the governor and the colonial assembly confiding in them, and relying on their fidelity. The report of the revolt was soon known throughout the whole colony, but more particularly in the northern districts, the white inhabitants of which, being speedily collected together, established two strong posts at Grand Rivière and at Dondon, for the purpose of checking the advance of the revolt, until such time as a force could be concentrated, sufficiently powerful to disperse them: but in this they were disappointed, for the negroes had increased their own numbers by the revolt of the slaves on many other estates, and they had also been joined by a large body of mulattoes. With this united force, they successfully attacked the two positions which were occupied by the whites, who

were completely routed. Success put the rebels in possession of the extensive plain with all its surrounding mountains, abounding with every production of which they stood in need for their sustenance.

The defeat of the whites was followed by a scene of cruelties and butcheries which exceeds imagination; almost every individual who fell into the hands of the revolvers met with a wretched end, tortures of the most shocking description being resorted to by these blood-thirsty savages: blacks and mulattoes seemed eager to rival each other in the extent of their enormities.

The union of the mulattoes with the revolted slaves, was not an event unlooked for; as I have before remarked, they were strongly suspected of being the instigators of the rebellion. This junction caused serious apprehensions, that those mulattoes who had joined the whites in the city, and had marched for the purpose of cooperating with the inhabitants of the plains, would desert their posts and go over to the revolvers; and it is probable that such an event might have ensued, had not the governor, before he permitted them to be enrolled, and before he could implicitly confide in them, demanded from them their wives and children, as hostages for their adherence to the cause which they had engaged to support.

In this northern insurrection, the destruction of

the white inhabitants, it is said, was considerable, exceeding, of all ages, two thousand; besides the demolition of the buildings of a great many plantations, and the total ruin of many families, who from a condition of ease and affluence were reduced to the lowest state of misery and despair, being driven to the melancholy necessity of supplicating charity, to relieve the heart-rending calls of their hungry and naked offspring. The loss of the insurgents was however infinitely greater; being ignorant of the effects of cannon they were consequently cut down in masses, while the sword was also effectually used. It appears that upwards of 10,000 of these sanguinary wretches fell in the field, besides a very large number who perished by famine, and by the hands of the executioner; a very just retribution for their savage and inhuman proceedings. There is every reason to believe that the loss sustained by them in all their engagements must have been immense, as they seemed to have imbibed a most extraordinary idea of the effect of artillery: it is said of them by a writer of repute, that “The blacks suffered greatly in the beginning of the revolution by their ignorance of the dreadful effects of the guns, and by a superstitious belief, very generally prevailing at that time, that by a few mysterious words, they could prevent the cannon doing them any harm, which belief induced them to face the most imminent dangers.”

Whilst these ravages were going on in the north, the western district was menaced by a body of men of colour, who had collected at Mirebalais, sanguinely expecting to be joined by a large party of slaves from the surrounding parishes. Their aim was the possession of Port au Prince and the whole plain of Cul de Sac; but being joined by only about six or seven hundred of the slaves of the neighbourhood, they did not succeed in their object; and after having set fire to the coffee plantations in the mountains, and done some injury amongst the estates in the valley, they began to deliberate on their condition, and to devise some plan, by which they might be able to rescue themselves from the dilemma into which they were thrown by their own rash and improvident proceedings. Some of the most powerful of the mulattoes, who found it impossible to gain the negroes over to their cause, deemed it advisable to propose an adjustment of their disputes, and attempt to bring about a reconciliation with the whites. One of the planters, a man of some power and address, and having been always very highly esteemed by the people of colour, as well as the negroes through the whole of the Cul de Sac, interposed, and a treaty was concluded on the 11th of September, between the people of colour on the one part, and the white inhabitants of Port au Prince on the other.

This treaty was called the *Concordat*: it had for

its basis the oblivion of past differences and the full recognition of the decree of the national assembly of the 15th of May. The treaty was subsequently ratified by the general assembly of the colony, and a proclamation was issued, in which it was held out that further concessions were contemplated for the purpose of cementing a good understanding between both classes, and these concessions, it was supposed, alluded to the admission of those persons of colour to the privileges of the whole who were born of enslaved parents. Mulattoes also were voted to be eligible to hold commissions in the companies formed of persons of their own colour, and some other privileges of minor consideration conceded to them. This, it was hoped, would restore order, and enable the people once more to enjoy peace and repose. But a circumstance occurred which blasted these hopes, and the flame, which appears only to have been partially subdued, was rekindled, and burst forth again with an astonishing rapidity, devouring all within its overwhelming reach.

Immediately after the ratification of the *Concordat* by the colonial assembly had been announced, and when it was admitted by all parties that its several provisions, amongst them the decree of the 15th of May, were judicious and highly commendable, tending to preserve order and tranquillity through the island, intelligence was received of the repeal of that very de-

creed by the national assembly in France, and of its having been voted by a very large majority. This was followed too by an intimation that the national assembly had determined on sending out commissioners to enforce the decree of the 24th of September 1791, which annulled the decree of the 15th of May, and to endeavour to restore order and subordination. Such unaccountable, and, as they may be justly characterized, deceptive proceedings on the part of the national assembly excited the indignation of the people of colour, who immediately accused the whites of being privy to these transactions, and declared that all further amity and good understanding must be broken off, and that either one party or the other must be annihilated. All the coloured people in the western and southern parts flew eagerly to the standard of revolt, and having collected a strong force, they appeared in a few days before Port au Prince, on which they made an attempt, but as that city had been strengthened by an additional force from France, it was enabled to receive the attack of the insurgents, and ultimately to repel them with no inconsiderable loss. The city however sustained considerable injury, and the revolted were successful in several attempts to set fire to it, by which a very large part of it was burnt down, or otherwise injured.

In the plains of the Cul de Sac the negroes joined

the mulattoes, allured by the charm of plunder and the pledge of freedom, and the expectation of satiating their lust on the defenceless and unoffending white females who should fall into their hands. In these plains some sanguinary battles were fought, remarkable however for nothing except the unrelenting cruelties with which the prisoners of the respective combatants were visited, and the barbarous and inhuman executions which followed them.

In these engagements it is recorded that the whites had the advantage, but they were unable to follow up their success, being destitute of a force of cavalry for the pursuit, a circumstance which made it quite impossible for them to improve on any decisive movement which they had effected. It appears, that in every skirmish or engagement the whites were in all cases most forward and bold in their attacks, and few only were the instances in which the contest was commenced by the mulattoes; whenever they were brought in contact with their opponents they exhibited no individual or collective displays of courage and heroism, but, on the contrary, there seemed a tincture of cowardice in all their proceedings, for they arranged the negroes in front of their position, and in all cases of advance these deluded creatures bore the first attack of their adversaries, whilst their coloured allies, leaders, and deluders, often remained inactive during the moment of trial and slaughter.

In December the commissioners Mirbeck, Roosne, and St. Leger arrived. Their reception was respectful, and there was a peculiar degree of submission shewn to them; but when they proclaimed a general amnesty and pardon to all who should submit and desist from further acts of insubordination, and subscribe the articles of the new constitution, a general murmur was excited, and marks of disapprobation were shewn towards them, not only by the colonial assembly, but by every individual of the contending parties. They remained in the island but a short time; and as an opinion prevailed that they were the mere instruments or organ of the national assembly, they obtained no attention or respect. Without any display of talent, they aspired to the government of a people, who were not to be commanded without being first taught that their commission was of a pacific tendency, and that their instructions were to appease, and not to excite. Instead of this, they declined to give any explanation of the object of their appointment beyond that which had been previously known, the enforcing of the decree of the 24th of September 1791. Finding all their efforts unavailing, and that they were unsupported by either party, finding that their authority was disputed and their representations despised, and, above all, left without any troops by which they might attempt to enforce obedience to their power, and submission to the decrees of the

mother-country, they took their departure from the island by separate conveyances, after having made many most ineffectual attempts to obtain the confidence and the good opinion of the people over whom they were sent to preside, and from whom they were sent to exact an accordance with such measures as the national assembly might think it expedient to adopt.

About this time, also, there were some changes in France which indicated further arrangements with respect to the administration of the colonies, which could only tend to widen the breach, and inflame the parties to that degree of violence which would preclude the expectation of any amicable adjustment at a future period. The society of Amis des Noirs had now gained a considerable influence in the national assembly, and there seemed to exist an union of feeling in favour of the mulattoes, and also of the slave population, whom it was designed at no distant period to emancipate, however unprepared they might be, by moral improvement, to receive such a boon. It was suggested that instructions should be sent out to the colonial assemblies, conveying to them such intentions, as well as their opinion of the means by which “slavery might be abolished in toto”, without in the least affecting the interest of the people, or in any way putting their property in jeopardy. This design, however, of the anti-slavery party in France met with some momentary opposition, although the advocates of the

measure uttered loud invectives against the planters in general ; but whatever influence the former might have collected and brought against the latter, it is very clear it failed in its desired aim, for in less than two months this assembly passed another decree, which abrogated that of the 24th of September. This decree is of the 4th of April 1792, and it is the first step towards an emancipation of slavery, although it does not declare such an intention. It is important, and I shall therefore insert it from a translation in another work, to the writer of which I am much indebted.

“ The national assembly acknowledges and declares, that the people of colour and free negroes in the colonies ought to enjoy an equality of political rights with the whites ; in consequence of which it decrees as follows :—

“ Article 1st. Immediately after the publication of the present decree, the inhabitants of each of the French colonies in the windward and leeward islands shall proceed to the re-election of colonial and parochial assemblies, after the mode prescribed by the decree of the 8th of March 1790, and the instructions of the national assembly of the 28th of the same month.

“ 2d. The people of colour and free negroes shall be admitted to vote in all the primary and electoral assemblies, and shall be eligible to the legislature and all places of trust, provided they

possess the qualifications prescribed by the fourth article of the aforesaid instructions.

“ 3d. Three civil commissioners shall be named for the colony of St. Domingo, and four for the islands of Martinique, Guadaloupe, St. Lucia, and Tobago, to see this decree enforced.

“ 4th. The said commissioners shall be authorized to dissolve the present colonial assemblies; to take every measure necessary for accelerating the convocation of the primary and electoral assemblies, and therein to establish union, order, and peace, as well as to determine provisionally (reserving the power of appeal to the national assembly) upon every question which may arise concerning the regularity of convocations, the holding of assemblies, the form of elections, and the eligibility of citizens.

“ 5th. They are authorized to procure every information possible, in order to discover the authors of the troubles in St. Domingo, and the continuance thereof, if they still continue; to secure the persons of the guilty, and to send them over to France, there to be put in a state of accusation, &c.

“ 6th. The said civil commissioners shall be directed, for this purpose, to transmit to the national assembly minutes of their proceedings, and of the evidence they may have collected concerning the persons accused as aforesaid.

“ 7th. The national assembly authorizes the civil commissioners to call forth the public force when-

ever they may think it necessary, either for their own protection, or for the execution of such orders as they may issue by virtue of the preceding articles.

“ 8th. The executive power is directed to send a sufficient force to the colonies, to be composed chiefly of national guards.

“ 9th. The colonial assemblies immediately after their formation shall signify, in the name of each colony respectively, their sentiments respecting that constitution, those laws, and the administration of them, which will best promote the prosperity and happiness of the people, conforming themselves nevertheless to those general principles by which the colonies and the mother-country are connected together, and by which their respective interests are best secured, agreeably to the decree of the 8th of March 1790 and instructions of the 28th of the same month.

“ 10th. The colonial assemblies are authorized to send home delegates for the purposes mentioned in the preceding article, in numbers proportionate to the population of each colony, which proportion shall be forthwith determined by the national assembly, according to the report which its colonial committee is directed to make.

“ 11th. Former decrees respecting the colonies shall be in force in every thing not contrary to the present decree.”

The carrying of this decree into effect was entrusted to Messrs. Santhonax, Polverel, and Ailhaud, the executive in France sending out a body comprising eight thousand men of the national guards, for the purpose of compelling the colonists to submit to their authority. Having arrived on the 13th of September, their first act was to dissolve the colonial assembly, and their next, to send the governor, Blanchelande, to France, where, after an examination into his administration, he was sentenced to death, and suffered on the guillotine in the April following. M. Desparbes, who was invested with chief command in his stead, having disagreed with the commissioners, was also suspended, and, like his predecessor, he was sent to France to undergo a similar fate.

The greatest consternation everywhere prevailed on the announcement of this decree, and, as I have before observed, a pretty general feeling existed, that this was only a prelude to a general emancipation of the slave population, and which afterwards was actually realised. The white inhabitants, in particular, suspected the candour of the commissioners, who were anxious to have it believed that the object of their mission was nothing more than to carry into operation the provisions of this decree, and to settle all those disputes between the one class and the other, which had been fomented to the great destruction of persons and property. These agents

of the national assembly seem to have been well skilled in the art of dissimulation, more particularly the leader, M. Santhonax, who, whilst professing to the whites the warmest solicitude and anxiety for the preservation of peace and the promotion of the prosperity of the colony, was secretly intriguing with the mulattoes, and holding clandestine meetings with their chiefs; and in the end, in conjunction with his coadjutors, he openly declared that they, with the free negroes, should enjoy their privileges, receive the protection of the national guards, and that he would espouse their cause in every possible way in which it could be effectually promoted.

The properties of the white inhabitants, as well as their lives, seemed at this juncture in the greatest jeopardy, and they possessed no means of averting the fate which seemed to await them. Some little hope, however, was raised in their minds by the appointment of a new governor, M. Galbaud, who arrived to take the command in May 1793, and to place the island in the strongest state of defence, it being apprehended by the French government that the British might interpose in the existing disputes, as war had been declared between the two powers. His arrival was hailed by the authorities and the inhabitants of the Cape with the strongest manifestations of joy, and from his having property in the island, they had the highest confidence in his character for probity, and anticipated

that the most decisive measures would be adopted for the restoration of their property, and for the security of their lives. But how vain were their anticipations, and how fleeting their hope! The national assembly of France, the great mover of all the evils which afflicted this unhappy country, again interposed with new instructions, and suspended the new governor from his command, decreeing that any one holding property in the colonies should be ineligible to fill any office of trust in the colony in which his estate was situate.

Galbaud did not, however, resign his appointment without a struggle; and aided by his brother, a man of some spirit and great enterprise, he collected a force composed of militia, seamen from the ships in the harbour of the Cape, and a strong body of volunteers, and without delay advanced against the commissioners, whom he found ready to receive him at the head of the regular troops. A conflict severe and bloody ensued, and considerable resolution was displayed by the rival parties, each supporting their cause with unshaken firmness and determined bravery; but the sailors, who composed the greatest body of Galbaud's force, having become disorderly, he was obliged to retire, which he did without being in the least interrupted or opposed by the force of the commissioners.

The next day various skirmishes took place, in which the success was in some degree mutual; and

whilst the brother of Galbaud fell into the hands of the commissioners' troops, the son of Polverel was captured by the seamen attached to Galbaud's force. The commissioners finding, however, that their force diminished, and that their opponents were resolute and fought with unexampled bravery, had recourse to a measure which in the sequel caused much slaughter, although it succeeded in the destruction of Galbaud's force; they called in the aid of the revolted slaves, offering them their freedom, and promising that the city of the Cape should be given up for plunder. Some of the rebel chiefs rejected a proposition which could only produce the sacrifice of lives and the spilling of human blood, without in any way promoting their own cause, but Macaya, a negro possessing some power over his adherents, and being of a savage and brutal disposition, with an insatiable thirst for the blood of the whites, accepted the proposal of the commissioners, and with three or four thousand of his negro brethren joined their standard, when a scene of horror and of carnage ensued, the recital of which would shock the hardest and most unfeeling heart. Men, women, and children were without distinction unmercifully slaughtered by these barbarians, and those who had escaped the first rush into the city, and had reached the water-side, for the purpose of getting on board the ships in the harbour, were intercepted and their retreat cut off by these merciless wretches, just at

the moment when arrangements had been accomplished for their embarkation. Here the mulattoes had an opportunity of gratifying their revenge; here they had arrived at the summit of their greatest ambition and glory; here it was that these cowardly and infamous parricides, gorged with human blood, sacrificed their own parents, and afterwards subjected their bodies to every species of insult and indignity; here it was that these disciples of Robespierre—this injured and oppressed race—the theme of Gregoire's praise, and the subject of his appeal and harangue, shewed themselves worthy disciples of such masters! If any thing were wanted to establish the fact of these scenes being unexampled, and without a parallel, one thing, I am sure, will alone be sufficient, and that is, that the commissioners, these amiable representatives of the national assembly, the *immaculate* Santhonax, and the equally *humane* and *virtuous* Polverel, these vicegerents of the society of Amis des Noirs, these protectors of the mulattoes, were struck with horror at the scene which was presented to them, and repaired to the ships, there to become spectators of the effects of their own crimes, and of a splendid and opulent city devoured by the flames which had been lighted by the torch of anarchy and rebellion.

In this destruction of the Cape, some instances of the most extraordinary brutality were exhibited,

and others of devotedness and heroism were displayed ; one or two it will be as well to mention, as illustrative of the generosity and humanity of the one party, and of the ferocity and cruelty of the other. When the revolvers first entered the city, every man, woman, and child were bayoneted or cut down with such instruments as they could muster, but the young females were in most cases spared, for the momentary gratification of the lust of those into whose hands they fell. One case of the most singular enormity took place:—a leader of the revolted slaves, named Gautier, had entered the house of a respectable merchant in the square, in which were the proprietor, his wife, his two sons, and three daughters ; the sons were young, not exceeding the age of ten, but the daughters were elegant young women, the eldest about eighteen, and the youngest not exceeding fourteen. Gautier, assisted by one or two wretches equally inhuman, promised to spare the family, on account of his having received many acts of kindness and generosity from the father, to whom he was often sent by his master on business, he being a domestic slave. These poor creatures, who were at first half-expiring from the terror of the scene around them, and from the idea of being the captives of barbarians, recovered somewhat from the alarm into which they had been thrown, through the promises of security thus unconditionally pledged to them ;

and although not permitted to go out of the sight of their captors, they did not apprehend that any mischief was in embryo, and that their lives were to be sacrificed. Impressed with the idea of safety, they proceeded to prepare a repast for their supposed guardians, and set it before them in the same splendour as they were wont to do when receiving their best and dearest friends. Gautier drank freely, and his compeers did no little justice to the rich repast. Night coming on, and apprehensive of the consequences of a surprise from the governor's force, they began to deliberate upon what plan they should adopt to secure their unhappy captives from flight, when, not being able to devise any thing likely to be effectual, they came to the savage resolution of murdering them all. The daughters were locked up in a room, under the watch of two of the revolvers, whilst the remainder of them commenced the bloody task by bayoneting the two sons. The mother, on her knees, imploring mercy with pitiful cries, met with the same fate, whilst the husband, who was bound hand and foot, was barbarously mangled, by having first his arms and then his legs cut off, and afterwards run through the body. During this blood-thirsty scene, the daughters, ignorant of the tragic end of their parents, were in a state of alarm and terror not to be described, yet hoping that their lives were safe. But,

alas ! how deceitful that hope ! for their destiny was fixed, and their time but short. Gautier and his diabolical associates went into their room, stripped them naked, and committed on their defenceless persons the most brutal enormities, when with the dead bodies of their parents they were thrown into the flames which were then surrounding them, where they all perished.

I shall mention another case of an opposite character, and in which a degree of heroism was exhibited that deserves to be recorded with every praise. A M. Tardiffe, a planter, and a young man of considerable property and of great courage and presence of mind, had joined the force of the governor, and had consequently become an object of great hatred, particularly on the part of some of the mulattoes who resided in the vicinity of his estate. Awakened one night about twelve o'clock by the cries of females, he jumped up, and rushed to the room in which his sisters, two amiable young ladies, were reposing, where he found armed men attempting to get through the window. He instantly flew for his sabre and pistols, which were loaded, his sisters following him, and then returned to the room to oppose the assassins. He found one had accomplished his purpose of getting into the room, whom he in an instant ran through the body ; when, turning to the window, he shot another fellow just en-

tering, and afterwards one or two others who made similar attempts. About this time his domestics had all come up stairs, and they shewed themselves most faithful in adhering to their master; for, not contented with merely opposing the entry of the assassins into the house, they sallied forth to meet them at the front of it, and although their numbers were inferior to that of their unprincipled and lawless invaders, they successfully attacked them, killing seven, and driving away the rest, with the exception of one, who was captured, who happened to be the illegitimate brother of M. Tardiffe, to whom he had shewed the warmest affection and whom he had cherished as the dearest relation. In return for such ingratitude and villainy, how did M. Tardiffe act? Did he give him up for public justice? No. Did he permit his faithful and enraged domestics, who were witnesses of his crimes, to execute momentary vengeance upon him? No. But he took him by the hand, mildly remonstrated with him, and afterwards furnished him with the means of leaving the colony for America, lest the searching hand of justice might before long stay his career. I have thought it adviseable to relate these two cases, from the extraordinary enormity of the first, and from the singular circumstances attending the last, having received the detail of them from an individual who was engaged in most of the events which occurred at that period.

After this first revolt of the slaves in the north, emigrations commenced in almost all parts of the colony, some going to the United States, many to the neighbouring islands; and some of the most opulent and powerful of the planters to England, under the impression that the British government would be disposed to turn its attention to their cause. The war between France and England having commenced, some regard was paid to their solicitations, and through the instance of M. Charmilly (the M. Charmilly of Spanish notoriety) the government of England sent out directions to the governor of Jamaica to afford to those inhabitants of St. Domingo who were desirous to place themselves under British protection every possible support, and to send without delay a competent force, and to take possession of such places as the people might be disposed to surrender to them.

The intentions of the British government being known by the means of secret agents, the commissioners, Santhonax and Polverel, had recourse to every possible means of strengthening the force in the colony, and of being prepared for the reception of the British troops whenever they should make their contemplated descent. They collected the regular troops, militia, and such of the whites as were in their interest, together with the free negroes and mulattoes who had hitherto followed their cause. But this was not deemed by them a sufficient body

when united, to oppose British soldiers led on by experienced commanders. They therefore at once “proclaimed the abolition of every species of slavery, declaring that the negroes were thenceforth to be considered as free citizens”; and thereby assigned over to a lawless banditti the fee simple of every property in the French part of the island of St. Domingo, placing every white inhabitant within almost the grasp of a set of people insensible to every feeling of humanity, rude and ruthless as in their native wilds.

A description of these untutored people cannot be better given than in the language of Mr. Edwards, who says, “The Charaibs of St. Vincent, and the Maroons of Jamaica, were originally enslaved Africans; and what they now are, the freed negroes of St. Domingo will be hereafter,—savages in the midst of society, without peace, security, agriculture, or property; ignorant of the duties of life, and unacquainted with all the soft endearing relations which rendered it desirable; averse to labour, though frequently perishing for want; suspicious of each other, and towards the rest of mankind revengeful and faithless, remorseless and bloody-minded; pretending to be free while groaning beneath the capricious despotism of their chiefs, and feeling all the miseries of servitude without the benefits of subordination.” The prediction of this elegant author has certainly been realized in all its parts, and subsequent

events have fully confirmed the opinion which he had formed of the negro character, when left to his own uncontrolled will and unrestrained in his propensities. Sloth, lust, and every species of wantonness and cruelty marked the progress of the enfranchised slaves in the first moment of their freedom; and until leaders of decisive and resolute powers for command undertook to preserve some degree of order and submission, they wandered in parties through the different parishes, inflicting the most unheard-of cruelties on the innocent and unoffending, without regard to sex or colour. To the will and command of their chief they were generally obedient, although they were subjected to duties of the most dangerous and laborious description; but when the least relaxation of discipline was permitted, they again resorted to plunder and destruction, and to every other species of insubordination, gratifying their insatiable thirst for the blood of the whites, as well as of that of the mulattoes, who were averse to the measure of emancipation. In these predatory excursions they committed the most shocking excesses, and more real and afflicting accounts have been received of the enormities practised by them when wandering in detached parties, than have been known to follow the most sanguinary battle in which they had been engaged.

I see nothing through the whole career of the rebellion to induce me to alter my opinion of the cause

whence all these lamentable effects sprung; and I must again repeat, that it was not misconduct on the part of the proprietors which excited the first revolt, and induced the slaves to take up arms against those from whom, in innumerable instances, they had experienced kindness and indulgence. It was natural to expect that in a colony, the operations in which are entirely performed by slaves, some cases of oppression would occur which would justly deserve reprobation; but the rebellion became general, although I am not aware that any successful attempt has been made to shew that the conduct of the planters towards their slaves was generally harsh and oppressive.

De Vastey, in his remarks, would wish it to be inferred that the brute creation received infinitely more kindness and indulgence from their master than was shewn towards the slave: but De Vastey being a negro, it is natural that he should exhibit the worst side of the picture, without noticing its better one. He adduces no instances of that oppression which he wishes to prevail upon mankind to believe to have been inflicted: we have nothing from him but allegations and assertions, without proof to support them. It is true, that he puts forward some statements of cruelties inflicted on his negro brethren, but those were subsequent, even by his own account, to the revolt and to the emancipation; but he has forgotten that the first atrocities, the

first acts of cruelty and indiscriminate murder, were committed by his very brethren (for whom he claims the pity of mankind for their sufferings and for their unmerited bondage) on the plantation Noé, and others in the vicinity. De Vastey, it is plain, is no authority on which the charge of cruelty on the part of the planter *before* the rebellion can be supported.

With regard to the mulattoes, or free men of colour, who were doubtless the chief instigators of the rebellion and of the first revolt of the slaves, although they cannot escape the condemnation justly due to them for their perfidy, yet the extreme disabilities under which they laboured in some measure might be adduced in mitigation of the censure which their faithless conduct so truly deserved. If they had not commenced the work of revolt, but had remained quiet observers of the proceedings of the national and colonial assemblies, and delayed their operations until the result of the deliberations and arrangements of those bodies had been promulgated, they would have called forth spontaneous expressions of approbation from all classes of people: but the eagerness which they manifested for civil feuds and for a preponderancy of power in the colony, without any conditions and without the least possible reservation, has called down upon them, and I think justly too, very severe reprobation. It has been observed, that this

class of people were, from their education and from their general demeanour, as eligible members of society as the whites, and as such ought to have been admitted into all its rights and advantages. This, I believe, no one undertakes to deny; but it is no more than fair and equitable towards the white population to observe, that prior to every concession being made to them, something like a line of demarcation should have been drawn as to the limits to which those concessions should be carried, otherwise from their number and power the mulattoes might have obtained an overwhelming preponderancy in the colony, rendering the white colonists mere cyphers.

The decrees against the people of colour, as they appear on the records of the colony, are extremely harsh and impolitic, and a relaxation, if not a repeal of them, would have been only an act of justice. The government held them in no repute, but considered them as it were national property, and gave the public a right in them. They were subjected by the governors, when they had arrived at a particular age, to a military servitude of the most degrading kind, and for a time to labour on the public roads, the severity of which was almost too great to be borne. They were not permitted to hold any office of power or trust in the state, nor could they even follow the humble calling of a schoolmaster. The least possible taint in the blood excluded them, and the distinction of colour had no termination. Not

so in the British colonies, where it is lost in the third generation. It is said also, that “the courts of criminal jurisdiction adopting the popular prejudices against them gave effect and permanency to the system. A man of colour, being a prosecutor, must have made out a strong case indeed, if at any time he obtained the conviction of a white person. On the other hand, the whites never failed to procure prompt and speedy justice against mulattoes. To mark more strongly the distinction between the two classes, the law declared that if a free man of colour presumed to strike a white person, of whatever condition, his right hand should be cut off; while a white man for a similar assault on a free mulatto was dismissed on the payment of an insignificant fine.” *

It is, I conceive, impossible for any one to be informed of the existence of such a system without exclaiming, that whatever might have been the proceedings of the people of colour in the work of rebellion, their grievances offered considerable extenuation of their conduct. This presents the most disgraceful and indefensible page in the colonial records of criminal jurisprudence. True it is that its severity, that its flagrant injustice, precluded the possibility of putting it in force; the abhorrence which it so generally excited among all orders of

* Anonymous.

people, made it a dead letter ; but it was notwithstanding a law in force, and might have been acted upon by an arbitrary and unmerciful judge.

The only circumstance that contributed towards affording the coloured people some degree of security and protection under their disabilities was the power which they indirectly derived from the possession of property in the colony. They consequently had influence, because under a corrupt government money bought it, and many were the venal officers of the state who had stooped to be their pensioners. Many of these mulattoes held large estates, and possessed besides extensive available funds ; these men in most cases evaded those exclusions from society, to which their brethren of less influence were obliged to submit. They were secure enough both in their persons and property, whilst the less wealthy among their coloured brethren had to submit to every species of insecurity and mortification.

I have now said as much as may be deemed necessary on the subject of the situation of the coloured people at the time of the first disturbances in St. Domingo, and I trust I have made it appear conclusive, that the cause of those disturbances did not proceed from the oppression and the tyranny practised over the slaves, but from the measures of the national assembly, the colonial assemblies, aided

by that specious and intriguing body, the society of Amis des Noirs, and the coloured people then residing in France, who had been tainted with the pernicious doctrines then prevailing in that country.

CHAPTER IV.

Effects of emancipating the slaves.—Arrival of the British forces.—Their subsequent operations.—Evacuation by General Maitland.—M. Charmilly negotiates with the English.—Views of the English cabinet.—Parties in the contest.—And insincerity of the French planters.

HAVING, in the last chapter, arrived at the period when Santhonax and Polverel conferred freedom upon the slave population, and at the time also when the planters of the colony had solicited the aid of the British government to their cause, I shall now proceed in my detail of the effects produced by the former, and, in as succinct a manner as possible, notice a few of the operations of the latter, as well as the consequences arising from them.

No sooner had the abolition of slavery been promulgated, than it spread through the whole colony with remarkable rapidity, and the work of insubordination and destruction commenced. In the different parishes the slaves rose simultaneously, formed into bodies, took possession of the mountains, and secured themselves within those fastnesses which everywhere abound through the island. They then sallied forth into the plains, spreading devastation around them, setting fire to the cane fields, and de-

molishing every description of habitation within their range, murdering the unoffending white inhabitants wherever they met with them. In one part of the colony the insurgents amounted to nearly one hundred thousand, without any leader who had the least possible command over them. In the north their force in the first instance only amounted from about twenty to twenty-five thousand, but they quickly increased to forty thousand of a most desperate and sanguinary character.

The British force under Colonel Whitelocke made its appearance before Jeremie on the 19th of September 1793; it consisted only of about eight hundred and seventy rank and file. As this place was to be given up to the British force by stipulation, the town was taken possession of the next day, and the inhabitants all took the oath of allegiance with much eagerness. Cape St. Nicolas next followed; but here the inhabitants displayed some hostility, and most of them joined the standard of republicanism, although they had before strenuously adhered to the royal cause, and kept the white flag always hoisted. Tiburon was next tried, but here, notwithstanding the strongest pledges of cooperation on the part of the planters, their infidelity was so manifest, and the force of the enemy had become so formidable, that the troops were obliged to retreat with some loss, and this object of the expedition therefore unfortunately failed. From fatigue and

from sickness, from the exposure to which they had been subjected, both in the sun and the noxious dews of night, the troops became much dissipated and discouraged, and further operations were suspended until a force from England arrived of sufficient magnitude to prosecute further offensive measures. This did not take place until the February following, when a British squadron arrived with troops, which were immediately landed, with Major (now Sir Brent) Spencer at their head, who most gallantly attacked the enemy, drove them back with considerable loss, and thereby retrieved that which before ended in a failure. The whole bight of Leogane was now commanded by the British squadron, and a further force being expected from England, it was anticipated that Port au Prince would fall an easy conquest, from the supposition that the people were mostly in favour of their cause. A considerable time elapsed before the reinforcements from England made their appearance; in the interim, many skirmishes took place in the vicinity of Leogane, as well as at Tiburon, and in the neighbourhood of Cape Nicolas Mole; in some instances the British were successful, and in others the enemy obtained advantages.

About this period it was that Andrew Rigaud first made his appearance at the head of the revolted slaves: he was a man of colour, and had the command at Aux Cases. With about two thousand of

the rebels he marched from his station and besieged Tiburon; but the fort which was manned by some British soldiers, who defended it with their usual intrepidity, and who afterwards sallied forth, attacked the besiegers in the field, and put them to the rout with great slaughter.

During the interval occasioned by the non-arrival of the reinforcement from England, the planters who were, in the first instance, favourable to the cause of the British, began to shew some symptoms of displeasure; and the tardiness with which the operations were carried on, and the absence of that decision which the urgency of their situation required, induced many very powerful individuals to relinquish all further adherence to the party in which they had engaged, and to join the republican standard.

On the 19th of May the force which had been so long looked for arrived under the command of General Whyte, who, with Commodore Ford, proceeded at once to deliberate on the measures which it would be adviseable to adopt for the capture of Port au Prince. On the 30th the ships of war, consisting of four ships of the line, three or four frigates, and several smaller vessels, anchored off the city. The land forces amounted to only about fifteen hundred men capable of doing duty. The next morning a flag was sent to summon the city to surrender, to which no attention was paid, and it is even said that

the letter was returned unopened. The commissioners, Santhonax and Polverel, were known to be in the city with a considerable force; and it was expected that a powerful stand would be made, for the preservation of this important place. Fort Bizotton, which is situate on an eminence to the southward of the city, commands the Leogane road and the southern entrance in the harbour. The land-side was attacked by a body of troops under the gallant Major Spencer, whilst a simultaneous attack was made on the sea-side by two of the ships of war. Captain Daniel of the forty-first regiment, with about seventy or eighty men, took advantage of a thunder storm which happened about eight o'clock, entered the breach which had been rendered practicable, and carried the fort at the point of the bayonet. The captain was severely wounded, and some of his men and officers fell. The city soon surrendered, and the commissioners evacuated it on the fourth of June, the birth-day of the then sovereign of Great Britain, George the Third, when the British troops entered and took possession of it together with the shipping in the harbour. It was the intention of the republican commissioners to set fire to the city, but the prompt and decisive attack of the British gave them no time for carrying so destructive a design into effect.

This capture was of great consequence to the

cause of the British as far as their proceedings had gone on; it gave confidence to the soldiers, and inspirited the colonial troops who had joined their standard; but it afterwards proved to be the grave of many a British officer and soldier: sickness began to rage amongst the troops to such an alarming extent, as is generally the case in the autumnal months, that it was found necessary, for the preservation of the post, to erect additional lines of defence, fearing that in their then condition the enemy might try to regain the position. To accomplish this, the troops were subjected to incessant toil, first in the sun, and then during the night exposed to all the pernicious vapours arising from heavy rains which fall during the rainy seasons. In point of booty the capture of Port au Prince was a very fine acquisition, although the commissioners carried off with them every thing valuable which it contained, consisting of upwards of two hundred mule loads. They were accompanied also by upwards of two thousand of the inhabitants, who followed in their career. Finding however that they had lost all their influence in the colony, and that Rigaud and Toussaint L'Ouverture had obtained possession of the whole, they thought it expedient to leave the island, and return to France, where they received the congratulations of the government, whose representatives they had been appointed to carry

into operation the most injudicious decrees that could possibly have been framed for the internal government of any colonial appendage.

The value of the captured property has been variously estimated : a writer of some authority says, that “ In the harbour were found two and twenty top-sail vessels, fully laden with sugar, indigo, and coffee, of which thirteen were from three to five hundred tons burthen, and the remaining nine from one hundred and fifty to three hundred tons, besides seven thousand tons of shipping in ballast ; the value of all which at a moderate computation could not be far short of four hundred thousand pounds sterling. One hundred and thirty-one pieces of cannon regularly mounted in batteries were on the lines.”

After the reduction of Port au Prince, a further reinforcement arrived under the command of Lieutenant-Colonel Lennox, consisting of about six hundred men, but on their passage from the windward islands to Jamaica, to which latter place they first sailed, sickness broke out amongst them, by which more than one hundred died on board, and a hundred and fifty were left at Port Royal in the last stage of disease. It is impossible to describe the mortality that prevailed amongst the troops in St. Domingo. When active operations were likely to be attended with a beneficial result, the commander-in-chief was prevented from taking advantage of the

positions which he held, by the epidemic which at the time so lamentably raged. There could not be produced eight hundred British soldiers in a condition for the field, and many of them had only a short time previously been discharged from the hospitals; of course they were not equal to the fatigue of active service, nor were they in the least fit for a duty which rendered it necessary to expose them to the pernicious humidity of the night air. The commander-in-chief, General Whyte, was seized with this malignant fever; and his health was so much impaired by the effects of disease, and anxiety for the fate of his officers and men, who were daily dying around him, that he was compelled to leave the island and return to England, when the command devolved on Brigadier-General Horneck.

From the departure of General Whyte in September, 1794, until the arrival of General Williamson in the month of May following, nothing of any material consequence ensued, except some skirmishes between the posts of the British and revolters, attended with no decisive result on either side. During this short period of inactivity on the part of the British, Rigaud, collecting a strong force, advanced towards Leogane, which at that time was defended by some colonial troops, and succeeding in his attack upon the place, he inhumanly murdered the French planters who fell into his power, and afterwards advanced upon Port au Prince; but in his at-

tempt upon Fort Bizotton which commanded his advance, he failed, having been repulsed by the garrison, with great slaughter, whence he retreated, for the purpose of making another effort for the recovery of Tiburon. He left Aux Cases with a force of three thousand men with four small armed vessels, and on the 25th of December they commenced the attack on the place. The fort, which consisted of only about four hundred and fifty men, defended it with great bravery; and after the loss of two-thirds of their number, the remainder sallied forth, cut their way through the revolvers, and reached Irois in safety.

In the vicinity of St. Marc, Colonel Brisbane, who commanded there, had much to do in keeping the insurgents in check, who had at this time become exceedingly bold in their movements, and seemed determined on the most vigorous operations, both offensive and defensive. The colonel with a few British and some colonial troops, obtained advantages over them in several skirmishes in the plains of the Artibanite; but whilst he was engaged there the mulatto inhabitants of St. Marc, who had pledged themselves most solemnly to observe the strictest neutrality, violated their pledge, and in the most cowardly manner put to death all whom they found actively engaged against the French republic. The garrison defended themselves in the fort, from whence they were relieved in a short time by a vessel of war from

Cape Nicolas Mole. The white inhabitants also of St. Marc, many of whom were the most forward to hail the arrival of the British and to place themselves under British protection, engaged in a plot for the destruction of Colonel Brisbane, but that officer, ever on the alert, discovered and successfully defeated their designs.

At Port au Prince a similar conspiracy was brought to light, the object of which was the destruction of the garrison and all the English people by those very French inhabitants who joined in hailing with acclamations the arrival of the British force before the city. Such abominable treachery did not go without its commensurate punishment; the conspirators were seized, and about twenty of the principal ones, amongst whom were several French officers of rank, were condemned by the sentence of a court-martial. Of these conspirators fifteen were shot on the 18th of February, 1795, and the remainder were sent off the island.

General Williamson, who had been previously appointed commander-in-chief in the West Indies, arrived in the island in May, and immediately proceeded to place every station in the best state of defence that his very limited means would allow. He endeavoured to strengthen the whole line of posts from St. Marc to Jeremie, and not having a force sufficient to enable him to secure all points by a strong cordon of British and colonial troops, he re-

sorted to a measure which, although at the moment it might have been one of expediency, was not likely to be advantageous in the end. To augment his force he formed several corps of negroes, whom he purchased of the French planters, and placed them under the command of officers of the line; but their inefficiency was soon discovered, and they became not only a very unserviceable, but also a very ungovernable body. General Williamson retained the command but a very short time; his successor, General Forbes, completed the arrangements of his predecessor, and remained entirely on the defensive.

In the autumn of this year, 1795, intelligence had been received that the war between France and Spain had terminated, and that the Spanish part of the island had been ceded to the French republic in perpetuity. It was stipulated, however, that so many of the inhabitants as should feel disposed to depart from the island to reside in the dominions of the King of Spain, should be permitted to remove or dispose of their property, and that the space of one year should be granted to them for that purpose.

About the end of this year the termination of the operations in Flanders having placed troops at the disposal of the British government, Brigadier-General Howe arrived with about seven thousand men at Cape Nicolas Mole. From the extent of this force a great deal might have been accomplished had they arrived at an earlier stage of the proceedings

in the island, but the subjugation of the colony had now become extremely difficult, if not altogether impracticable. They attempted but little, and becoming languid and spiritless from sickness and disease, whilst the enemy were increasing in numbers, as well as in vigour and activity, the little that was undertaken proved unsuccessful.

It was not until the month of March, 1797, that any active operations were recommenced; when General Simcoe landed to take the command, an officer who had been selected by his government for the important trust, from his known talents and tried experience. He began his arduous undertaking by examining the whole line of defence, and lost no time in making every judicious arrangement for resuming offensive operations. It was also about the same time that the negro Toussaint L'Ouverture appeared invested by the republican government of France with the high rank of General-in-Chief of the Armies of St. Domingo. To this very extraordinary personage the British general was destined first to be opposed; and from the system of insurrectional warfare which had been pursued, the general found he had to combat with an antagonist of no ordinary capacity and courage. Wary and exceedingly cautious, well acquainted with the strength of the British force and the experience of their commanders, Toussaint made no effort beyond that of menacing the position of Mireba-

lais, before which he appeared with an almost overwhelming force. The British force at that point not being sufficient to oppose his progress, retired thence through the plains of Cul de Sac into Port au Prince, abandoning the whole of the country through which they retreated, and from which, from its fertility, the enemy were enabled to obtain abundance of provisions. By this movement also all communication with the Spanish part of the island was cut off.

To the southward, however, the operations were more favourable to the British. The negroes were driven from every post which they had occupied in the neighbourhood of Port au Prince, and Rigaud at the head of his mulatto force was defeated at Irois. Nearly at the same time Toussaint attacked St. Marc's, but was obliged to retire with considerable loss, leaving a great many of his followers prisoners.

Notwithstanding these partial successes the British cause in the island seemed on the wane, and their force diminishing from a variety of concurrent circumstances, no attempt was afterwards made to advance against the enemy; but measures were adopted to guard against any surprise or any attack which their opponents contemplated upon those positions, in the line of defence, which were considered to be vulnerable. In the interim, and during the existence of this irregular warfare, General

Simcoe, finding that in the present condition of his forces nothing could be undertaken with the least probability of success, and that to remain within his line of defence was imperative, left the island about the month of August, when the command devolved on Major-General Whyte. Finally, however, the Honourable Brigadier-General Maitland succeeded, to whom was left the important duty of making the most beneficial arrangements for evacuating the island, which his situation could command. And when it is considered that that gallant officer (who did not arrive until April, 1798,) took the command of the British forces under circumstances of extreme difficulty and discomfiture, at the moment of disasters and distress, the termination of the contest, the subsequent truce and negotiations with Toussaint, although making some concession, were called for by considerations of overwhelming expediency. These negotiations gave up the whole of the British possessions, and their colonial black troops (for whom a very large sum of money was paid to the very persons who afterwards took arms against them) to the black general, Toussaint, in the name of the French republic, and thus ended an enterprise from which no advantage resulted either to the ex-colonists or to the interests of Great Britain.

It is not my province to enter into a discussion of the merits of the enterprise into which Great

Britain had been led, nor shall I venture to censure the undertaking on the one hand, or to applaud it on the other. It was commenced unquestionably at an unfavourable period, when the government of England had to contend, not only against the gigantic power of the French republic in Europe, but against the revolutionary spirit which had manifested itself at that time in England. Involved, therefore, as she was at the time of the emigration of the French agents from St. Domingo in disputes abroad and in domestic feuds at home, it is not surprising that those efforts were not made which the planters had anticipated, and which they were led to expect from the pledges which had been given to M. Charmilly, who had been the organ of those planters, and who, it is to be feared, was too sanguine in his representations of the unanimity which prevailed amongst them. I should be disposed to think favourably of the conduct of M. Charmilly had I not received the most unquestionable information, that his communications were much too highly coloured, and that his zeal for the cause of his colony somewhat exceeded that which ought to have been evinced by a discreet and prudent negotiator. The British general was without doubt deceived as to the strength of the revolters and as to the disposition of the planters; and the unanimity said to have existed amongst them, was most manifestly negatived by subsequent events, in which in-

trigue and treachery superseded fidelity and honour. M. Charmilly, however, in the opinions of many, may not have subjected himself to censure by his conduct; he may have been actuated by the best of motives, and have thought, at the time, that by exhibiting a favourable side of the picture the impression would be likely to succeed; but the best informed persons, with whom I have had opportunities of conversing on the subject, have given it as their unbiassed sentiment, that had not the disposition of the colony been too favourably represented, the British cabinet would either never have entered into the contest, or have undertaken it with their accustomed promptitude and known vigour; they would never have left any thing to chance, nor have depended so much upon extensive cooperation.

However much inclined Great Britain might have been to seize a favourable moment for dismembering republican France of her colonial possessions, yet I think she would have paused before she commenced any offensive operations against St. Domingo in its then insurrectional state, had she not been led by the most specious arguments to believe that the object was attainable without any great efforts; for although the slaves were in open rebellion, still they, as well as the mulattoes, were divided against themselves, and that an interposing power would inevitably turn the scale, and eventually succeed in restoring tranquillity, and finally the

conquest of the whole colony. That the cabinet of England had been influenced by the accounts laid before it of the state of St. Domingo, needs no further argument than this, that the force sent was quite inadequate for the accomplishment of the object, which certainly would not have happened, had the descent upon that island received that deliberation which was usually given to similar operations in the time of war.

Before I proceed any further in my remarks, it may not be irrelevant to shew who were the parties engaged in this civil warfare and general havoc in the colony, for I find only one or two who have written before me who have been sufficiently clear and explicit on this point; and it is probable that I may not be quite so explanatory as the subject requires, but I shall, I trust, succeed in dissipating some of the cloud in which the whole seems to have been enveloped.

At the commencement of the revolution in the colony, the party that first appeared was composed of those white inhabitants who were tainted with republicanism, those of the mulattoes or gens de couleur of property who imbibed the same principles, and others of the people of colour, who had no stake in the country, but embraced similar opinions respecting liberty and equality. Their opponents consisted of the white inhabitants and persons of colour who adhered to the old form of government.

To the former party, in the course of time, were added the revolted negroes, who had doubtless been instigated by them, and after the promulgation of the decree declaring a general emancipation, they were joined by the greater proportion, if not by the whole of that class. To the latter party a few only of the mulattoes, and a very small body of negroes, remained attached; added to which were the British forces which, from the end of the year 1793 to the evacuation in 1798, at different periods were landed.

To strengthen the former party, and to weaken the latter, the decrees of the national assembly of France materially contributed, whilst the proceedings of the general colonial and provincial assemblies, instead of giving to the latter any support, had a contrary effect, by inducing many of the people of colour, who had espoused it, to hoist the national cockade, and become active members of the republican party, thereby giving the cause of the royalists a fatal blow. It will be perceived that most of these proceedings of the two parties in the contest occurred before the British forces had been called in; and that the emancipation of the slaves was simultaneous with their arrival and an act of the French commissioners to strengthen the national cause against the royalists and the British. Now as the agents or emigrants of the royalist party who had gone to England, and as the negotiations

of M. Charmilly took place at the very period when the hopes of his party rested upon so insecure a foundation, it seems to me something like deception was practised, and that the British government were not correctly informed of the actual state of the cause which they were engaging to support ; and it is under this impression, an impression founded upon the authority of persons who were actually engaged in all the scenes of active operations which took place from the first arrival of the British to the termination of their proceedings under the Honourable Brigadier-General Maitland, that I venture to charge the French planters and their party with that want of unanimity which M. Charmilly, their accredited representative, assured the British commander displayed itself through most parts of the colony.

If an impartial review be taken of the whole of the conduct of the French planters during the contest in which they were embroiled, it will become evident that no blame can be attached to the British commanders who were successively employed. They had to contend against a variety of conflicting opinions and unexampled sickness, and had local difficulties to surmount of great magnitude. They evinced on all occasions superior military judgment, undaunted courage, and unwearied zeal, and exhibited the greatest prudence and discretion in moments of no ordinary anxiety.

The calamitous disease which prevailed amongst the troops, was itself almost enough to dispirit the most sanguine ; and it is not to be wondered at, that men who met death bravely in the field, should have shrunk from its approaches when it thus appeared in all its hideous forms amongst their comrades.

Such was the state of things in the colony at the close of the year 1798, and with which I shall conclude this chapter.

CHAPTER V.

The period between the evacuation by the British forces and the arrival of the French army under Le Clerc.—Cultivation.—Law to enforce it.—Character of Toussaint.—Reverses.—His arrangement with the French general.—His seizure and removal to France.

THE evacuation of the colony by the British troops having taken place, most of the planters who had been faithful to their engagements departed at the same time, taking with them such moveable property as they were enabled to carry away: many proceeded to Jamaica, and others to Cuba and the United States. Toussaint L'Ouverture was thus left in full possession of the island, and in the undisturbed enjoyment of the chief command, with which he had been invested some time before by the French republic. The adherents to the British, except such as had previously left the island under the protection of the English squadron, having joined the national standard, every thing seemed to have the appearance of tranquillity. Peace succeeded the din of arms and the asperities of civil war.

Having, therefore, completely subjugated the party who had been opposed to him, Toussaint com-

menced his work of improvement in the whole department of his government. Free from the toils of the complicated warfare in which he had been engaged, his first care and attention were turned to the culture of the soil, in which in a short period he made the most rapid and astonishing progress : strongly impressed with the conviction that “ agriculture is the main spring, the master sinew of every great state, the perennial fountain of wealth”, he began to enforce a rigid attention to all its branches, and by every possible means to place it in that highly productive condition in which it stood previously to the revolution. Many of the planters who had joined his standard were reinvested with their estates, but without any property in the slaves, and they were encouraged by him to persevere in the cultivation of their lands, assured of his protection and of the early adoption of such regulations as should enable them to procure cultivators. He seems to have possessed a very correct idea of the true source from whence national wealth was obtained, and he left no measures untried that would in the least promote its increase. He had heard, and appeared firmly to believe “ that rural or agricultural labours are equally conducive to health and strength of body and mind. The culture of the earth constitutes the most natural and innocent employment of man ; it fills our houses with plenty and our hearts with gladness.” He never allowed an opportunity

to escape him of shewing how indelibly this maxim was imprinted on his mind. It may, however, be well imagined, that after five or six years' relaxation from the labours of the field, those who had been accustomed to it in a state of slavery, were not at all disposed to return of their own accord to their original occupations; and as he well knew that his negro brethren could not be easily induced to labour, and that some degree of coercion would be requisite to enforce it, he began to issue strict injunctions, that every one not employed in any military capacity should labour in the cultivation of the lands held not only by the government, but by such of the planters as had been restored to their estates.

The planters were compelled to receive them on their plantations in the capacity of servants, and the cultivators were ordered by the government to make choice of their employers under whom they were destined to work for their sustenance, and were not on any consideration permitted to leave the properties on which they in the first instance agreed to labour, unless their services were required in the army. The government had fixed a remuneration for the cultivators equal to one-third of the crops, but there were many who made other arrangements more suitable to the views of parties, and by which, also, each was accommodated. Such a law as this, and enforced so immediately after the cessation of civil war, when the minds of the negroes were scarcely

cool, was a strong illustration of the power which Toussaint held over them, and of his conviction, that nothing could be accomplished in the advancement of agriculture unless he at once adopted powerful and rigid measures. He therefore enacted laws and regulations to encourage and excite industry, while he denounced very heavy penalties against idleness and vagrancy.

This celebrated edict for the enforcing of the culture of the soil appeared in the year 1800, and it subsequently formed a leading part of the Code Henry of Christophe. It embraces every object that could possibly be conceived likely to promote his great aim; and whilst its enactments might have the appearance of severity, unpalatable to the people just emerged from slavery, so great was his influence that he felt no alarm for the consequences of enforcing them; and those who had the temerity to infringe them were visited with the whole weight of the penalties.

This law apportions the hours of labour for the cultivator, which by the 22d article appears in every point the same as that which is exacted from the slave in the British islands, that is to say, it commences at the break of day and concludes at night, allowing an interval of an hour for breakfast, and another of two hours at noon, or thereabouts. It provides against any innovations, and precludes the labourer or the proprietor from the chance of impos-

ing on each other. I see nothing ambiguous in it, it is clear in the letter, and the spirit of it cannot be erroneously interpreted. From the 113th to the 120th article inclusive, it appears beyond the possibility of contradiction, that Toussaint was conscious that nothing could be done in the work of the soil without such forcible regulations as would command the most strict attention to tillage.

It is quite clear that the labour which this law exacted each day from the cultivator was not oppressive, nor have I been able to discover that the slaves in the British colonial possessions ever complained of the labour to which they were subjected, as having been too severe; and it is undeniable that Toussaint, under the very law which has been cited, compelled the same portion to be done, and that for the better insuring its performance, military guards were placed to superintend the labourers and to seize those who endeavoured to evade their duty. That they could not have been injured by labour, and that they did not murmur at its quantum is tolerably clear, for it is said by a writer of some repute, that “the plantation negroes were in general contented, healthful, and happy”; and that this was their condition I am assured by the concurring testimony of men who had witnessed their state at that period. Is it not the case also in the British colonies? Are not the slaves on the plantations in the time of crop, when the labour is perhaps heavier than

at any other period, “contented, healthful, and happy”? Most unquestionably they are; I never saw them otherwise than “contented and happy”, except at the moment when some insidious and intriguing person was attempting to estrange them, and to impress them with the idea that they were degraded and debased.

If degradation accompanied labour, the cultivators under Toussaint were the most abject people in existence, for they were driven to it under the strong arm of military power, and for any offence which they committed they were liable to be brought before a military tribunal. There were no civil authorities by which the indolent or refractory cultivator was to be tried for his offences; there was no distinction between the vagrant who was detected in idleness and the soldier who fled from his post, they were both amenable to the military power, were sentenced by a court-martial, and awarded an equal punishment.

Possessed of no mean capacity and judgment, he knew the character and the dispositions of his negro brethren, and so nicely did he discern and reward industry, and discriminate between the active and meritorious and the indolent and the worthless, that, although in some cases his judgment was harsh, it was admitted to be just. His plans were allowed to have been devised with great skill, and his regulations produced the hap-

piest results, which soon became manifest throughout the whole colony. His agricultural improvements excited the astonishment and surprise of his greatest enemies, for in a short period after he commenced his system, the most beneficial results became visible; and notwithstanding the protracted warfare in which he had been engaged, and the devastation caused by it, he produced a crop equal to one-third of the quantity of the best year of the French planters.

He was extremely attentive to the state of the population, which he was anxious to increase by every possible means. He held out to those who had emigrated during the contest, every encouragement to return, pledging himself to reinstate them in their properties, and assuring them that their agricultural avocations should receive all the support which it was possible for him to afford. This had a very happy effect, and many returned and brought with them the slaves who had accompanied them in their flight, but who of course became free on their landing. He also endeavoured to impress the people with a sense of their improper conduct when they addicted themselves to sensuality and voluptuousness, and made great efforts to prevent its extension, by recommending marriage throughout his country: he was aware of the evil effects of the system of polygamy which prevailed amongst his brethren, and knew that it was a severe check on the

increase of population, for he had discovered innumerable instances in which the offsprings were but few, where concubinage was so unlimited; and after a short time, it became evident that an increased population resulted from his salutary regulations.

With regard to the general character of this extraordinary man I have but little to say in addition to what has been already recorded of him. I am however inclined to believe that his biographers speak of him with too much warmth, and would have it believed that he was almost without a fault. Whatever may be the prevailing opinion, he has left indelible marks behind him which prove that he was revengeful and sanguinary in the field; and the atrocities and cruelties which he exercised over those mulattoes who fell into his hands, are demonstrative of no little ferocity of disposition. It has been argued in exculpation, that surrounded as he was with people of that class who adhered to his cause, and who, he expected, might revolt and join the standard of his enemies, it was a matter of absolute expediency, that he should resort to the severest measures to deter them from deserting his standard, or from engaging in any enterprise inimical to his cause. But in all his actions he seemed to be actuated by a determination to exact the most rigid acquiescence in his will and a complete acknowledgment of his supreme power, and to establish which, true it is, he had at times recourse to

very harsh and cruel measures, which, although effectual for a time, nevertheless proved injurious to the peace and security of his government afterwards.

Rainsford, who is no mean authority, for he had personal knowledge of Toussaint, says, that he was a man without those unrelenting feelings which others ascribe to him; but this opinion may proceed from gratitude on the part of that officer, who was set at liberty by Toussaint after having been in prison for a considerable period, and in momentary expectation of the forfeiture of his life. Speaking of him in his general character, and of his actions in the field, he says: "Thus proceeded this illustrious man, like the simple acorn, first promiscuously scattered by the winds, in its slow but beauteous progress to the gigantic oak, spreading its foliage with august grandeur above the minor growth of the forest, defending the humble shrub, and braving the fury of the contending elements." And again, as if the author would wish to find a cover for the many massacres which Toussaint had sanctioned and indulged in, he says: "When the cloud, charged with electric fluid, becomes too ponderous, it selects not the brooding murderer on the barren heath, but bursts perhaps indiscriminately in wasteful vengeance over the innocent flocks reposing in verdant fields. He was, without doubt, a man possessed of many virtues, and performed many very good and

very generous acts, and, what must be admitted to have redounded greatly to his reputation, he was always grateful, and never left an obligation unrequited. To those planters whom he induced to return to the island, and whom he restored to their properties, he was generous, kind, and indulgent; and of the confidence which they placed in his assurances, they had never cause to repent. Taking him altogether, he was undoubtedly a most extraordinary character, and whatever might have been the extent of his vices, they were certainly counter-balanced and atoned for by many virtues.”

It is said of him by another writer, who seems to have been conversant with all his private and public acts, that “the excellences of his character unfolded themselves more and more, as opportunities were afforded for their developement. The same humanity and benevolence which had adorned his humble life, continued to distinguish him in his elevation. He never imitated the conduct of other leaders, in flattering the multitude, encouraging them in crimes, or urging them to revenge and slaughter; on the contrary, mercy, industry, and order were always inculcated by his counsels, recommended by his example, and enforced by his authority. The fertility of his inventions, the correctness of his judgments, the celerity of his movements, the extent of his labours in the combined and multifarious business of war and government astonished both friends and

foes.”* And in another place it is observed of him: “If there was one trait in his character more conspicuous than the rest, it was his unsullied integrity. That he never broke his word, was a proverbial expression common in the mouths of the white inhabitants of the island, and of the English officers who were employed in hostilities against him.”

Immediately after the business of the war had been completed, Toussaint proceeded to the restoration of public worship, according to the forms which existed prior to the revolution, and he even extended the liberty of religious worship beyond the Roman communion, by admitting one or two of the Methodist persuasion, who had arrived from the United States, to the privilege of preaching in Cape François, and to whom he gave every protection.

His military establishment was on a scale of some extent during the war, but was much reduced at the peace. The discipline of his troops did him great credit, and excited considerable surprise in the British officers; their movements were effected with great precision, and although they were not after the manner of European evolutions, yet they were well adapted for that species of irregular warfare in which they were engaged. The men were under tolerable command, and no symptoms of insubordination were known to have shewn themselves; they seemed to be aware of the consequences that would

* Anonymous.

ensue to their cause if order and submission were not rigidly exacted, and they were therefore taught to obey their officers as a duty indispensable for their security.

The country generally was so intersected and varied with underwood and mountains of difficult ascent, that more reliance was placed on the movements of irregular bodies detached in small parties, than on any thing that could be accomplished by the more steady operations of heavy masses. Such being the mode of warfare best calculated to meet the obstacles presented to military operations, Toussaint sought to drill his troops in such evolutions as would enable him effectually to meet the exigencies with which he might have to contend. He had them taught expertness, promptitude and dexterity, and quick and steady firing, without any attention to those movements in column which are so much practised in Europe. It is said of them, that “at a whistle a whole brigade would run three or four hundred yards, then separating, throw themselves flat on the ground, changing to their backs or sides, keeping up a strong fire the whole of the time till they were recalled; then they would form again in an instant with their wonted regularity. This single manœuvre used to be executed with such facility and precision as totally to prevent cavalry from charging them in bushy and hilly countries.” This system is nearly similar to the one practised by our rifle and light infantry corps in England, and de-

cidedly best adapted for any operations in the colonies, where the country presents so rugged and uneven a surface. The amount of his force has been variously stated, and I do not conceive it possible to give a fair estimate of the whole during the time of the war: his peace establishment consisted of about forty thousand foot and two thousand cavalry, all of which were well equipped, and at all times in readiness for active service.

In the organization of his government, and in the framing of his constitution and laws, Toussaint was assisted by some able men from America and Europe. He never allowed any prejudices against white persons to influence him, when their services were required, nor did he permit any of the superior officers of his government to shew any disrespect towards them, but he exacted the most courtly attention to them as the most likely means to secure the aid of men of learning, whatever may have been their country or their calling. It was by this that he induced the able Molière and M. Marinit, as well as several well-informed English and Americans to reside near him; to these he was kind and liberal, obtaining from them the greatest assistance in the organization of his municipal governments, and in the whole arrangement of the different departments of state, as well as in forming regulations for the better insuring to his country a commercial intercourse with strangers, with-

out which all his efforts in cultivating the soil would have been unavailing; for without a vent for the products there would have been no stimulus for the exertions of the grower, and one of the sources of national wealth would consequently have been dried up. His tour through the Spanish part of the island was attended with considerable advantage to him, for it infused a kind of confidence into the people, by whom he was received in every part with great respect, and often with every demonstration of joy. This is not surprising, for the fame of his deeds and his warlike achievements and his deportment, which is said to have been mild and courtly, were likely to excite favourable sentiments, and to elicit a good deal of applause. This tour was certainly one of necessity, and not undertaken from any vain parade and ostentation; for the Spanish part of the island, although formally ceded to France by the treaty of 1795, had not all been occupied by the republican forces. The city of Santo Domingo, a place of considerable strength, and surrounded with fortifications sufficiently powerful to resist any attack that might have been made upon it, still held out, and it was not until the arrival of Toussaint in 1801, with a large force, that a legal surrender of the whole Spanish division was finally accomplished. Having succeeded in this, he left his brother Paul in command, and then pursued his journey through the other districts, establishing

posts, appointing officers to command them, with other important military and civil arrangements, which he deemed necessary for the purpose of governing more easily the whole of that part of the island. Having completed this tour, which was attended with much benefit to every part of the island which he visited, he began to hope for some repose from the fatigues attendant on such multifarious occupations, which might enable him to cultivate the sweets of peace and retirement, as well as to see all those designs fully completed, and which had for their object, the enriching of his country and the happiness of his people.

The end of the year 1801 placed the whole island once more in some degree of tranquillity, and in submission to the authority of the negro chief, rapidly advancing in wealth and increasing its intercourse with those countries which sought to establish with it the friendly relations of commerce. But the short peace of Amiens, which took place in October of that year, leaving the then ruler in France, Bonaparte, without any power to contend with, his first object was the recovery of Saint Domingo. Wanting employment for his large armies, and instigated by the fugitive colonists who had been expelled at the commencement of the revolution, and who were anxiously longing for their lost possessions; thirsting also for colonies and commerce, and urged by the speculators in

France, he determined on subjugating the island by force, reestablishing slavery, and reinstating the ex-colonists in their original properties. To accomplish these objects by force rather than by negotiation, was more congenial to the temper and martial spirit of the French ruler. He therefore began to make extensive preparations for an undertaking, which he vainly thought could not fail ultimately to gain new laurels for his troops, and exalt himself more than ever in the estimation of the people of France, who were always forward to reward him for any successes which accompanied his efforts, with no ordinary demonstrations of joy.

This expedition consisted of twenty-six sail of the line, on board of which were embarked 25,000 men, under the command of the brother-in-law of Bonaparte, General Le Clerc, seconded by some of the ablest generals of France, and many other officers of distinction who were conversant with the island, and who formerly held properties in it. Not, however, relying entirely on what such a force might be able to execute, the First Consul had recourse to a measure which he concluded would insure the neutrality of Toussaint, if it did not induce him to lend him an active cooperation. Two of the sons of the negro chief had been sent to France for their education, for the purpose of giving them the opportunity of following a course

of studies, which might prepare them to fill, with advantage to their country, those important posts for which they seemed destined. Taken from their preceptor by orders of the First Consul, they were hurried on board the fleet, to be made as it were to intercede with their father, and, if possible, to prevail on him to accede to such proposals as the commander-in-chief of the expedition was empowered to offer; and, in fact, they were placed as hostages in the hands of the French commanders, and thus made amenable for any hostile steps which their father might be disposed to take.

The expedition arrived in the bay of Sumana, in the eastern extremity of the island, on the 25th of January, 1802, when, without the least delay, General Le Clerc distributed his force into three divisions, which were to make simultaneous attacks on three distinct parts of the colony. One division was directed to disembark and take possession of the city of Santo Domingo, and was commanded by General Kerseran; another, under General Boudet, was sent to Port au Prince; whilst the commander-in-chief proceeded with the remainder of the troops to the south side, when a part was landed at Mansenillo Bay, under General Rochambeau; and the principal body with Le Clerc, and his personal staff intended to disembark at Cape François, for the purpose of gaining possession of that city.

Toussaint had been apprised of the intentions of

the French government to send out a force to Saint Domingo, but of its extent, its nature, and its ulterior designs, he had no knowledge. He merely conjectured, that it had no hostile object, and that it was just such a force as might have been expected would be sent by the parent state, for the better insuring the peace and obedience of the colony. That such was his impression I think there is great reason to believe, for he issued his orders to all his generals at their respective posts, commanding them to receive the French troops without suspicion; and his proclamation called upon the people to admit them as friends. Others again seem to infer that he not only knew that the designs of the consular cabinet were inimical to the existing order of things in the colony, but that he knew the extent of the means which were to be employed in their execution. If this latter were the fact, then that caution, vigilance, and activity which had marked his former career, had entirely forsaken him, for it is evident he made no preparations for the reception of a force entertaining hostile intentions.

I shall not go through the whole detail of the landing of this armament at the different points selected for that purpose, but I shall offer a short sketch of the general operations which followed.

Whatever might have been the instructions given by the First Consul to Le Clerc, the latter did not appear the least disposed to try the effect of nego-

tiation before he displayed some intentions of hostility, for General Rochambeau, who landed in the neighbourhood of Fort Dauphin, formed his troops on the beach, and the negroes, who had been led by the proclamation of their governor-general to believe that they had landed as friends, ran in crowds to witness the disembarkation, and with the most friendly demonstrations welcomed their arrival. But Rochambeau, most dastardly and inhumanly, without the slightest intimation of what was to follow, charged them at the point of the bayonet, when a great many were slaughtered, and the rest with difficulty fled to places of protection, leaving the fort in possession of the French. This took place on the 2d of February, two days before the arrival of the commander-in-chief in the harbour of Cape François, and as the account of it soon reached the city, General Christophe, who commanded there, was enabled to prepare for its defence, and at once discovered, that instead of coming as friends, this force had arrived for the purpose of subjugation.

By this premature commencement at Fort Dauphin, Le Clerc was foiled in his design of taking the black general by surprise, or in playing off any of those stratagems and intrigues so characteristic of a Frenchman. From the intelligence which he had received of the movements of Rochambeau, Christophe was instantly on the *qui vive*. Wary and watchful, he disposed of his men judiciously,

strengthening the most vulnerable points, and encouraging his troops to meet every attack with courage and fortitude, setting to them an example of confidence in their own power, which animated them to the most surprising efforts. He also intimated to the inhabitants of the city, that their lives would be inevitably held as a security for the hostile proceedings of the French armament, and that he would never surrender the place so long as a single habitation remained standing. This threat of the negro general produced the most appalling sensations, because they were aware of the intentions of the French being hostile, and they were also sensible, that there would be no abatement of the dreadful denunciation of the black commander. To avert the dreadful alternative, a select body of the inhabitants, headed by the municipal authorities, were deputed to wait upon the French commander-in-chief, and to implore him to desist from hostile operations, until such time as their safety could be provided for, as it was the determination of Christophe to sacrifice them, and to destroy the city, should any attack proceed from the French force. Le Clerc gave them no assurances that he would desist from offensive measures; he received them, however, courteously, and advised them to return to the city, and take with them the proclamation which he was about to issue, and give it every publicity in their power. He also told them in the

most specious way, that the object of his force was not the restoration of slavery, but the preservation of the colony in obedience to the consular government of France, without in any way interfering with or infringing upon the rights of the people, as now admitted; but rather to fix those rights on a more permanent basis, and to secure them against innovation. To such flattering communications the deputation listened with easy credulity, and returned to the city buoyed up with the delusive hope that their lives and properties would be protected, and that the lamentable catastrophe resulting from retaliatory measures would be effectually averted.

The proclamation of Bonaparte, couched in his usual ambiguous style, was intended no doubt to deceive the negro population by confirming their rights to be free and equal, whilst at the same time the real object of the expedition was the restoration of slavery, and the restitution of the colony to its condition previously to the revolution. Having pledged however his faith to the negroes, that they should enjoy that freedom which had been conferred upon them, they were at the same time told, that in the event of their rejection of the terms which the commander-in-chief was empowered to offer, violence would be resorted to, and the pledge withdrawn. It may not be improper to insert a translation of this proclamation, which will thus speak for itself.—

“INHABITANTS OF SAINT DOMINGO!

“Whatever your origin or your colour, you are all French; you are all free, and all equal before God, and before the republic.

“France, like St. Domingo, has been a prey to factions, torn by civil commotions and by foreign wars. But all has changed, all nations have embraced the French, and have sworn to them peace and amity; the French people too, have embraced each other, and have sworn to be all friends and brothers. Come also, embrace the French, and rejoice to see again your friends and brothers of Europe.

“The government sends you Captain-General Le Clerc; he brings with him numerous forces for protecting you against your enemies, and against the enemies of the republic. If it be said to you, these forces are destined to ravish from you your liberty, answer, the republic will not suffer it to be taken from us.

“Rally round the Captain-General; he brings you peace and plenty. Rally all of you around him. Whoever shall dare to separate himself from the Captain-General will be a traitor to his country, and the indignation of the republic will devour him, as the fire devours your dried canes.

“Done at Paris, &c.

“(Signed) The First Consul, BONAPARTE.

“The Secretary of State, H. B. MARET.”

Such a document as the preceding, promulgated too at a moment when an extraordinary panic had arisen from the extent of the French force, about to commence its operations simultaneously from several points, was not likely to pass without making a very deep impression on those whose minds were vacillating and unfixed, and who had refrained from declaring themselves until they were informed as to the views of the French government with regard to the future administration of the colony, in the event of their being successful. This proclamation was received by the wavering among the negro population as one of great sincerity, assuring them that they had nothing to apprehend about their being again destined for slavery. Many therefore embraced the offers which it held out, and joined the standard of the invaders, and Le Clerc, anticipating further submissions before Toussaint arrived, determined on the commencement of active measures so soon as he should be informed that Rochambeau, having effected a successful landing, was advancing upon the city. He did not however land his forces till he had tried the effect of an epistolary communication with General Christophe, the commander at the Cape, in which in the true Gascon style of invective and threat, Le Clerc informs that individual, that unless he immediately accedes to the landing of his forces, he will "hold him (Christophe) responsible for what may happen."

Christophe was not to be entrapped. Firm, inflexible, and determined in his conduct, he returned an answer to the French commander couched in language which could bear but one interpretation, that he would make every possible resistance to the French arms, and that they should not enter "Cape Town until it was reduced to ashes." "Nay," says he, "even in the ruins I will renew the combat." Again he says, "How can you hold me responsible for the event? you are not my chief. I know you not; and can therefore take no account of you, till you are acknowledged by Governor Toussaint."

Immediately after this correspondence had taken place, Le Clerc made preparations for landing, which he effected promptly in the neighbourhood of Da Limbe and the Bay of Acul, no great distance to the westward of the city. Le Clerc's object seems to have been to gain the heights round the Cape, before the negroes could effectually carry their threat of devastation by fire and sword into execution. These movements were anticipated by the negro general, who therefore prepared to intercept them. Knowing that the white inhabitants were wavering and faithless, and that he could not confide in them were he to permit their neutrality, and being fully aware that many mulattoes, and even negroes, were secretly inclined towards the French, he without hesitation commenced the work of conflagration, which he had previously given them to understand

would be done the moment the French set their foot on shore in an hostile manner. The order being given, was obeyed with alacrity, and both Le Clerc and Admiral Villaret, when they came within sight of the city saw the devastation which was likely to ensue. The French commanders made great efforts to save the town, and the crews of the ships were landed for that purpose, but they were only able to save a few buildings from the destructive element.

The part of Christophe's threat most dreaded was the massacre of the inhabitants of the city, but to his credit be it said, he did not put it in execution. True no doubt it is that he carried off a great many whom he intended to hold as hostages for the conduct of the French; but it is not recorded that he treated them with any barbarity, or that he executed any of them. After this the negro general retreated with his forces, and took up a strong position until he was joined by the Governor-General Toussaint.

Having arrived a short time after the fall of the Cape, and having previously issued orders to all his subordinate generals to prepare for the most active defence against the French arms, Toussaint personally inspected every post, and minutely surveyed every position in which it was practicable to make a successful stand against his opponents.

It was at this time, and whilst he was at his seat at Ennery, about thirty miles from the Cape, that

his two sons were presented to him to try how far another attempt at fraud, sophistry, and hypocrisy might succeed. I shall not attempt to go through the whole detail of the scenes which took place between the wily tutor Coisnon, the affectionate children, the fond father, and the tender mother; let it suffice, however, to state that they failed of their wonted success, for Toussaint was inflexible. I cannot resist the temptation of quoting a passage from a writer, who describes the tender interview which took place between them. “The two sons ran to meet their father, and he with emotions too big for utterance, clasped them silently in his arms. Few it is to be hoped are the partakers of our common nature, who, on witnessing the embraces and tears of parental and filial sensibility, could have proceeded at least without powerful relentings of heart, to execute the commission with which Coisnon was charged.”

But this cold-blooded emissary of France beheld the scene with a barbarous apathy, worthy of the cause in which he was employed. When the first burst of paternal feeling was over, Toussaint stretched out his arms to him, whom he regarded with complacency as the tutor of his children, and their conductor to the roof and embraces of their parents. This was the moment which Coisnon thought most favourable to the perpetration of his treacherous design. “The father and the two sons”, says he, “threw themselves into each other’s arms.

I saw them shed tears, and wishing to take advantage of a period which I conceived to be favourable, I stopped him at the moment when he stretched out his arms to me."

The crafty and unfeeling Coisnon thought that the most favourable moment had arrived for opening the business of his mission, and without delay entered upon it by addressing the chief, and imploring him to reflect upon the consequences that would inevitably result from any hostile measures against the power of Bonaparte, as any resistance to so powerful a force, composed of troops that had always been elated with victory, must prove unavailing. On the other hand, he pledged the sincerity with which his master was actuated, spoke of the admiration which Toussaint's conduct had excited, and of the distinguished valour and judgment which he had displayed in the multifarious operations of the war. He also held out to him the most attractive, yet delusive, promises of what would ensue from his joining the French standard, and the vengeance that would doubtless accompany any act of hostility; and, finally, he handed to the negro chief the letter, of which he was the bearer, written by Bonaparte in his own hand, and teeming with expressions which might have moved the resolution of more determined men than Toussaint. But that cautious, unbending, and inflexible man was on his guard against the snare that was laid to entrap him, and the cunning tutor

was necessitated to try the effect of a more powerful agency, the intercession of his children and the entreaties of his wife. Bonaparte, in his letter to the chief, tries what effect an allusion to the former will have. “ We have made known to your children, and to their preceptor,” he says, “ the sentiments by which we are animated. We send them back to you. Assist with your counsel, your influence, and your talents, the captain-general. What can you desire? The freedom of the blacks? You know that in all the countries we have been in, we have given it to the people who had it not. Do you desire consideration, honours, fortune? It is not after the services you have rendered, the services you can still render, *and with the personal estimation we have for you, that you ought to be doubtful with respect to your consideration, your fortune, and the honours that await you.*” Such an appeal might have had some influence and power over a vain man, and the feelings of the father might have been softened when the eloquence of the preceptor pleaded in behalf of the children, whose lives would be the forfeit of the non-compliance of the parent. But this would not do, nor would the subsequent artless appeal of the tutored children, aided by the faithful mother, from whose tears the savage Coisson prematurely looked for success. All were unavailing, and Toussaint, after having composed himself, and assumed an appearance of ease and confidence, took the preceptor

by the hand ; then directing the others to retire, he said to him, with a stern and dignified manner, " Take back my children, since it must be so. I will be faithful to my brethren and my God."

Notwithstanding the failure of Coisson's mission, a truce was agreed upon for a few days, for the purpose of carrying on a correspondence between Le Clerc and Toussaint, to try if the horrors of war might not be averted by mutual concessions. Le Clerc anticipated a favourable result, but Toussaint's reply contained no augury of his submission to the will of the chief consul. The truce, therefore, being at an end, each of the chiefs prepared for active operations, and Toussaint and Christophe were declared to be enemies of the French republic, and all persons were called upon to seize them.

Every art and every stratagem was now devised by Le Clerc, which might entice over the negroes to his cause ; and he therefore first held out assurances to their officers of rank and preferment in the French army, and to the negroes themselves he gave the most solemn promise that their freedom should be respected and preserved inviolate. Another circumstance also, which very materially contributed to the successes which Le Clerc gained, was, that the cultivators throughout the colony had had enough of war, and had determined to remain neutral in the pending struggle, so long as their properties were

insured to them, and their remaining inactive was permitted. Consequently, Le Clerc having nothing to apprehend from them, was at liberty to turn the whole of his attention against the organized forces of the negro chiefs; and, to oppose these, required no little skill and manœuvre, from the great obstacles which the face of the country presented to European forces, inured only to a systematic mode of fighting, whilst the negro soldiers were thoroughly instructed in skirmishing, bush fighting, and every other irregular mode of warfare. For such operations as these, they were in the highest possible order, both as to discipline and equipments. They knew well how to manage their artillery, were quick in firing, and no bad marksmen. All their movements were effected with amazing rapidity, and from one point of communication to another they flew with the greatest celerity. The French seemed astonished at the quickness with which they performed their movements, and at times when they thought victory certain, found themselves unexpectedly opposed to a body, who made the most desperate attack upon them, and forced them to retire completely discomfited. They also had another advantage over the European troops; neither the scorching heat of the sun, nor the pernicious influence of the night air, had any injurious effects upon them, whilst the French were suffering severely from the evil consequences of both. Although one day they might have sustained a de-

feat, still, on the next, the negro soldiers appeared in force before their enemy, prepared to renew the combat. Not so with the French; for the severity of the duties of the field was insupportable, and on many occasions, when they had gained advantages, their fatigue was so great that they were unable to follow them up, and thereby throw their opponents into disorder and confusion.

The principal exertions of the French troops commenced in the plains of the north, just after the truce had expired, and about the 20th of February, by an attack on Plaisance, which place having surrendered, the black commander and his soldiers, consisting of five hundred infantry and cavalry, joined the French standard. Marmalade followed, having been defended a short time by Christophe, who was at last obliged to retreat, in consequence of the treachery of one of his officers who had surrendered an important position on his line, and had followed the example of the commander at Plaisance.

In the neighbourhood of Port Paix, the French troops, under Humbert, sustained a check; and on the 20th of February the troops under General Debelle were obliged to retire, after having sustained some loss.

The division of General Boudet having landed at Port au Prince, left that city, and proceeded against La Croix des Bouquets, where the celebrated Dessalines had taken up a position; but on the approach

of the French force he set fire to the place, and the next day, by a most extraordinary and rapid movement across the mountains, appeared before Leogane, to which place he also set fire, notwithstanding the resistance offered by a French frigate which lay in sight, and which had been sent thither to insure its safety. The movements of this chief were the most surprising; one day he was found in the plains of the Cul de Sac, acting with the most determined bravery, and committing dreadful ravages in the face of the French army; and the next, he was found in the plains of Leogane committing similar excesses, avoiding, in both, coming in contact with the enemy in the open field. Bush fighting, and setting fire to the plantations, to impede the advance of the enemy and destroy their provisions, was his only aim, and in this he seems to have been unusually fortunate and successful.

One of the black chiefs, La Plume, who had retreated before Generals Desfourneaux and Hardy from the vicinity of Plaisance, surrendered, with all his troops, to General Boudet, which compensated for the losses which the French had sustained, and was a serious, if not a fatal, blow to the negro cause.

On the 24th of February, General Rochambeau fell in with Toussaint, who had under him about three thousand men, and had taken up a strong position in the Ravine à Couleuvre. The attack was commenced by Rochambeau, and met with great skill

and courage by the negro general and his troops, and a most sanguinary conflict ensued. The blacks fought with the most determined bravery, and the French made the greatest efforts to exceed them; and at last, after having lost eight hundred of his men, who were left dead in the field, Toussaint thought it prudent to retreat, and take up his position on the banks of La Petite Rivière. There could not have been more military skill shewn than was displayed by the respective commanders in this battle. The slaughter was immense, and the loss of the French, it was conjectured, exceeded that of the negroes; but the latter had no public journals to announce their triumphs, whilst the former had the benefit of gazettes and proclamations to extol their successes, and to magnify the disasters of their opponents. It is certain that after the action Rochambeau could not advance, and the black general was in some measure justified in claiming the victory, as well as some merit for taking up another position, particularly as Le Clerc was advancing to cut him off with a large force; and which seems true enough, for he took up a line in the vicinity of Gonaives, with his advance upon the road of St. Marc.

Whatever opinion is entertained of the result of the battle, its consequences were certainly injurious to his cause; his retreat was demonstrative of discomfiture, and such a feeling existed among his troops, as well as among those of his other divisions.

Under the influence of this feeling, and the allurements of the French generals, who held out the most engaging promises, desertions became frequent, and in one instance the conduct of the black general Maurepas, who commanded the district of St. Marc, and who, at the moment that Le Clerc was engaged in making preparations to compel him to retire from it, surrendered with his force, consisting of two thousand men, proved quite decisive of the fate of the contest.

Declining to enter into a further detail of the operations in the field, as they consisted chiefly of irregular warfare, and presented nothing of importance, I shall merely make a few observations on the conduct of the respective chiefs who commanded, and their measures to defeat each other's design.

I think it must be admitted to be indisputable that the greatest success was in favour of the French, and that although some partial advantages were gained by the blacks, yet they seemed to have no ultimate chance of prolonging the contest. It is true that Toussaint, Christophe, and Dessalines held strong positions, and that it would take a considerable time to dislodge them, as well as cause a great sacrifice of human lives. Le Clerc therefore resorted to every device likely to gain over the black troops, and the most successful one was, his promotion of many of those who had previously joined him, and the practice of an unusual degree of

mildness towards the remainder, by which he so much exalted himself in the estimation of the whole, that the negroes undertook to allure their brethren to their standard, holding out to them advantages similar to those which they had themselves gained. This stratagem succeeding in a very extensive degree, he was joined by a great number of the troops of the black chiefs, and a great many laid down their arms, so that in a short period Toussaint was left with scarcely any adherents, except those few planters who suspected the designs of the French, and correctly dived into the intentions of the French general. These remained firm to him for a time, but when one reverse was followed up by another, and when there was not a visible chance of any further efforts being likely to succeed, and when his retirement seemed inevitable, most of these deserted him, and made their submission to the French commander, leaving Toussaint to contend against a variety of difficulties, and to surmount obstacles sufficient to have reduced the proudest and noblest spirit to a state of the greatest despair. But even at this trying period Toussaint's fortitude never forsook him. He foresaw that his enemy before long would find that they had to contend with greater obstacles than any which his resistance could present; nor was he mistaken; for in a short time, Le Clerc, elated by his successful movements, began to develop the designs with which he was

instructed, and thinking that he had completely discomfited the whole of the forces of the black generals, or, at all events, that he had so dispersed their followers that they could not again appear before him, he set about executing the great object of the expedition—that of restoring the planters who had accompanied him to their hereditary estates, and of placing the negroes once more under their control, reviving their ancient property in them, and pledging the French government to resist all future attempts that might be made to disturb them.

It is impossible to portray the indignation which this impolitic and base act of Le Clerc so universally excited. The very planters themselves, apprehensive of the consequences which so unwise and so hasty a proceeding was likely to produce, declined to avail themselves of an offer, the impracticability of enforcing which seemed to them to be certain. They were convinced that no good could result from it; but circumstances of the most painful and dangerous nature were more likely to arise, were the general to attempt putting his plans into execution.

The poor deluded and credulous cultivators, who had been allured by the promises of their enemy, now saw their error, and without a moment's delay began to consult their own safety, to devise means to evade the orders of the French commander, and join their brethren who still adhered to the negro gene-

ral; and finally to aid in defeating such outrageous proceedings by the most energetic and the most effectual plan which they had the means of concerting.

Such of the negro troops, also, as had joined the French under the perfidious pledges of the commander-in-chief, began to feel considerable anxiety lest they should be forced to share the fate which seemed to impend over their black brethren in general. To revolt, however, appeared almost impossible; they were not concentrated at any one point, but seemed to have been placed in small detached bodies, and were so completely under the control and surveillance of the French that desertion was difficult, and in most instances not to be effected without detection, when they were subjected to the most cruel punishment.

Toussaint now saw that his predictions were realized, and that the time had arrived when the scale of success would turn in his favour, and with that promptitude which accompanied all his resolutions and all his plans of operations, he seized the favourable moment, and with the most extraordinary celerity formed a junction with Christophe, when they proceeded towards the north, calling upon the cultivators on their way to join their cause, and to revenge the base and unprecedented conduct of the French general. From all quarters the cultivators flocked to their standard, and in a few days their force

became somewhat imposing; and although they were armed with such weapons only as could have been found on the plantations, and had but a short supply of musquetry, still they moved on by forced marches with the most surprising rapidity, driving their enemy from one post to another, without meeting with the least opposition, until they appeared before Cape François, which being defended by a strong force, and covered by the fleet in the harbour, was saved from the fate which awaited it.

Le Clerc, now shut up in the besieged city of Cape François, was reduced to the greatest extremities, and he began to devise means for evacuating the place, and taking up some position within the Spanish territory; but a strong reinforcement which arrived from France somewhat revived his hopes, although he knew further offensive measures would not be advisable. The city too, from the number of people within its walls, began to exhibit symptoms of a pestilential nature, and the alarm became most distressing; inhabitants and troops alike became martyrs to its ravages, and every thing indicated the most wretched termination of the siege. Beginning therefore to feel the evil consequences of his premature and precipitant as well as nefarious conduct, he began to consult with his officers upon some plan which might have the effect of putting a stop to the further prosecution of the impending struggle: he saw the error he had committed, and

it was necessary that he should recover the position he held, before he gave his ill-advised and perfidious orders for the reestablishment of slavery. To accomplish this, the captain-general had recourse again to cunning and delusion, and to every species of trick and artifice which his inventive mind could suggest: but it was a work of no ordinary difficulty to restore confidence, and impress the simple cultivators with an idea of sincerity, after having been guilty of the most atrocious acts of treachery and deceit. Something, however, it was imperative to try, and the usual measure of proclamation was immediately decided upon as likely to produce the desired effect.

This proclamation contains the old specious declaration of "Liberty and Equality to all the inhabitants of Saint Domingo, without regard to colour," and the most abject apology for his conduct in the late contest, with an assurance that his future intentions were of the most friendly kind, and that he ardently desired to reconcile conflicting opinions, appease internal discord, restore peace to all classes of people, and place the colony in the most flourishing and prosperous condition. In this proclamation a great deal was also said about a constitution that should be acceptable to the people, the basis of which was the old term "Liberty and Equality," providing however, it appears, for the

acceptation of it by the French government, as a measure of precaution.

It may easily be conjectured that such submissive expressions of regard and solicitude for the people would be likely to accomplish the Frenchman's purpose, and that the negro population, in their rude state of ignorance, would not be able to discover or penetrate into the designs at which he aimed. That this was the case with the proclamation of the captain-general, is most evident, for that class of the people, on its being declared to them by the emissaries of the French that the reestablishment of slavery was not contemplated, and that the French government merely aimed at the sovereignty over the island, became clamorous for arrangements, whilst the cultivators who had encountered much fatigue and inconvenience, and who had been deprived of those comforts which peace and repose presented, were equally anxious for some understanding by which a further prosecution of the war would be avoided. All classes seemed to concur in one point, that the only object for which contention and resistance to the French was justifiable, was the preservation of that liberty which the representatives of the French government declared to them in 1793, and which declaration had been confirmed by the national assembly of France.

This proclamation, issued by Le Clerc on the

25th of April, 1802, confirming, as they conceived, their liberty, they did not consider that there remained further cause for a continuation of the struggle, for the question of sovereignty was not one which gave them any concern.

To the wishes of the great body of the people Toussaint reluctantly submitted, and Dessalines gave his decided opinion that no negotiations should be entered into, except for the purpose of receiving a proposal for the evacuation of the colony by the French forces. Both these chiefs doubted the sincerity of the French general, and believed that his propositions were only intended to cover more vigorous efforts to crush them hereafter. In the mean time Christophe found it prudent, from some symptoms of defection among his troops, to open a negotiation with Le Clerc, and officers were appointed for that purpose, when the former demanded a general amnesty and preservation of his own rank and property, as well as that of all his compatriots: the same to extend also to Toussaint and Dessalines. To this Le Clerc, after some deliberation, but with no good will, acceded, and the arrangements were accordingly concluded.

Toussaint and Dessalines, after having reflected for a short time on their respective situations, and standing almost alone against the prevailing wish of the people, consented to the terms which had been granted to Christophe as a matter both of ex-

periment and expediency, and thus for the present ended the contest, which for the extent of it may have been justly described as the most cruel and sanguinary in the annals of warfare. By this peace the island of St. Domingo is admitted to be under the sovereignty of France.

The peace being concluded, the cultivators and proprietors returned to their homes, and recommenced their labours in the soil, in the pleasing hope of being permitted to remain in the bosom of their families, enjoying all those comforts of which the horrors of war had so long denied them. The three negro chiefs, Toussaint, Dessalines, and Christophe retired to their respective plantations, after having been assured by Le Clerc, with every mark of sincerity, that their persons and property should be held sacred, and that instructions should be transmitted to them, upon which they were to act in their future military commands. In their retreat, however, it appears that Dessalines and Christophe were far from feeling confident of their own safety; they consequently did not slumber in their retirement; and being greatly apprehensive of the consequences of the experiment into which they had been led, they waited, with no little anxiety, the result of it.

Credulous, and relying on the captain-general's honour, from the confidence which he had inspired, Toussaint thought of little but the enjoyment of

repose in the bosom of his family. At his estate in the vicinity of Gonaives, he took up his abode, surrounded by his faithful wife and endearing children (with the exception of his two sons who had been detained as hostages, and of whose fate no intelligence was ever received), there to indulge in the sweets of domestic life, after the toils and the cares of a protracted civil war, in which he had borne the most conspicuous part, and shared in all its extraordinary vicissitudes and all its heart-rending scenes of death and destruction. But his retirement was invaded—the snare was laid for him by the perfidious Le Clerc, and in the moment of sleep, unconscious and unsuspecting, he was surrounded by some troops sent for the purpose, torn from his bed in the dead of night, torn from his faithful wife and beloved children, and hurried on board a frigate, there to remain until preparations were made for sending him to France. It was useless and unavailing to make any resistance, or to exclaim against such treachery and inhumanity: he submitted to his fate, and left it to his countrymen to avenge his wrongs. He only asked for the protection and security of his family, but they became also the objects of suspicion, and were subsequently hurried on board the same vessel with their father. They were all sent to France, and their tragical end became the subject of general horror and indignation throughout Europe. Le

Clerc, to soften the barbarity and atrocity of this act, gave it out that Toussaint was plotting against the French, and was aiming, in conjunction with his other officers, to seize the first unguarded moment in which they might be caught, to break the peace, and to renew the combat with redoubled vigour and determination.

Thus terminated the career of Toussaint. His end will ever blacken the pages of French history, and leave such a stain on the character of its government that no lapse of time can efface. History cannot produce a more base and unjustifiable act of violence; and it is to be hoped, for the sake of humanity, its perpetrators will meet with that just execration which so much perfidy and treachery deserves.

CHAPTER VI.

The period from the seizure of Toussaint to the final expulsion of the French, by Dessalines, in 1803.—State of cultivation.—Commerce declined—and observations on the population.—Its extent.

THE dispute between the people of the island and the French had now assumed a different character, for it could no longer be designated a contest between the revolted slaves of a colony and their government, but a civil war, originating in an attempt of oppression on the part of that government, over those inhabitants whom it had thought proper to declare to be, “free and equal before God, and before the republic.” A conflict, I say, emanating from the basest act of duplicity, and from the most unexampled breach of faith and confidence that has been heard of in modern times; a conflict which, in the sequel, proved the destruction of its authors, and the expulsion of the French from all property in St. Domingo. Our minds must be totally divested of all those impressions which the rebellion of the slaves at first created; and we must view the future operations of the contending parties abstractedly, and not as having any connexion with past events.

Whatever might have been the instructions given to the captain-general Le Clerc by his master, that officer seems to have acted with a degree of precipitancy that must be condemned. Had the French ruler been ever so confident in the success of an enterprise as the one in which he had engaged, as a soldier and as a general who had commanded in a series of campaigns, he must have left something to the discretion of the officer whom he had appointed to conduct it, and not have insisted on an implicit obedience to instructions that could only have been given from a vague knowledge of the scene on which such enterprise was to be carried into effect. The success of most offensive operations depends in a great measure on the local information which a commanding officer acquires on his arrival at the point at which such operations are to commence; and a great deal, therefore, must, I imagine, be left to his judgment and discretion, without fettering him with instructions from which he cannot deviate, however injudicious and inefficient they may become, from the local obstacles with which he has to contend. Bonaparte himself, I believe, never acted but as circumstances pointed out, paying but little attention to the directions which, from time to time, he received from the executive government of France. I think it, therefore, not unfair to draw from this the inference that, on sending out his brother-in-law, Le Clerc, to

command the expedition to St. Domingo, he vested in him the power to act as circumstances might require, and as prudence and discretion might dictate.

After the outrage which he committed on the unfortunate Toussaint and his family, the captain-general began to deliberate on the organization of a new form of government, and about the end of June, 1802, he issued his regulations for that purpose; but he had forgotten that the treacherous conduct, of which he had so recently been guilty, remained unrevenged, and that the people would not submit to it with impunity, but resort to measures of retaliation until they had satiated themselves for the atrocious deed. These regulations had certainly nothing in them new; they were merely those of Toussaint, re-modelled as it were, but they were prematurely issued, for they only tended to inflame the more, and to hasten that crisis which began to threaten the French cause in the colony.

No sooner was the cruel seizure of Toussaint known, than Dessalines, Christophe, and Clerveaux flew to arms, collected their scattered forces, called the cultivators and others to join their standard, to revenge the outrage committed on their chief, and to defend themselves against the designs of the French general. In a few days, they found themselves at the head of a large body of troops, armed and well equipped, and determined on a most despe-

rate struggle for liberty, and either to expel the French or perish in the attempt. The French troops, on the other hand, were hourly diminishing by various diseases incident to the climate. The officers were dying daily, and others sunk into an irrecoverable despondency; and a disaffected spirit had manifested itself amongst them, through which not only the privates and subaltern officers deserted their standards, but even generals followed the example. The scenes of carnage and destruction which took place are said to have shocked humanity, and the atrocities of the French exceeded so much the executions of their black opponents, that the latter seem to have entitled themselves to the character of being merciful when compared with the tortures inflicted by the former.

The circumstance of the introduction of blood-hounds I have heard spoken of by some who were engaged in the war, and they have all declared that many of the statements of the cruelties said to have been committed by them were unfounded. They were brought it is true, but the blacks were prepared for them; and although in some instances in which they were tried they tore some persons, and absolutely devoured a child or two, yet they were found to be ineffectual for the object for which they were intended, as they were shot in great numbers, so that at last they had but few to use, and those which were left were rendered useless, from the negroes having

been always prepared to meet them. I do not mean by this that it at all lessened the enormity of such an act, on the part of the French, because it was not successful ; on the contrary, the ferocity of it stands unmitigated, although it proved abortive.

In the plains of the Cape, and in the city, the massacres by the French were beyond the powers of description ; and the least that can be said of the conduct of the agents of the French government is, that they must have been bereft of all feelings of humanity, that they were of the worst and most debased of the dregs of the French people, and unworthy to become the associates of even the untutored savage. The latter may plead nature for his savage propensities, but the former has nothing to offer to lessen the magnitude of his crimes, or to efface the recollection of his unheard-of cruelties.

Whilst these scenes of carnage and destruction were at their height, the French were daily losing their positions, and their force was constantly diminishing from the effects of the pestilence which raged through the whole army. The general-in-chief, who had for some time been in an impaired state of health, began visibly to sink under the ravages of disease, and on the 1st of November he breathed his last, leaving in the memory of his opponents a name blackened by the worst of crimes, unatoned for by one single virtue.

The command of the army now devolved on Gene-

ral Rochambeau, who, to say the least of him, was a worthy successor of Le Clerc, and possessed similar *virtues*. To him, therefore, was it left to pursue that barbarous policy which had been introduced by his predecessor, and which only tended to inflame the ardour of the black troops, without in any way promoting the good of the French cause. Rochambeau certainly took the command at a time when it must have appeared that the object of the expedition had failed, and that the prolongation of the contest would be attended with no favourable result. Opposed to an enemy, whose force was daily increasing, and whose ardour was unabated and resolution unshaken, he had but little hopes of accomplishing any thing beyond acting on the defensive, until such reinforcements should arrive as would enable him to act on the offensive with some degree of effect; but, even then, there seemed not the remotest possibility of his being able to retrieve the positions which had been lost, and place his forces in such security as might enable him to provide for a retreat, should subsequent disasters make such an alternative absolutely necessary.

In the early part of 1803, nothing decisive was done on either side. Rochambeau and Dessalines came in contact, and a battle ensued, in which the latter was successful; but the scene of carnage and massacres which followed is much too painful to admit of being detailed. The French general, who

took about five hundred prisoners, put them all to death, forgetting or careless of the fate of his own soldiers who were in the power of his enemy. The latter retaliated; and the next morning at day break, on as many gibbets, there were exhibited five hundred French officers and men, sacrificed through the savage impetuosity of their general.

The war having broken out between England and France in July, a British squadron appeared off Cape François and blockaded the harbour, thereby rendering to the blacks a most important service, which in a great measure contributed to accelerate the expulsion of the French. This squadron precluded the possibility of the French receiving any supplies from the Spanish port, and the garrison and inhabitants of the city were therefore reduced to the most lamentable extremities. Every thing that could be found, horses, mules, asses, all had been consumed, and they were at last obliged to feed upon dogs. It is said “that the French were obliged for several weeks to subsist on those very bloodhounds, which they had procured for the purpose of hunting down the negroes.”

The city was at last reduced to the most melancholy state from the effects of famine and disease, the besiegers making great exertions to intercept any supplies that might be on their way for the relief of the besieged. All hopes of eluding the vigilance of his enemies having at length vanished, and exten-

sive preparations having been made to take the city by storm, the French commander-in-chief began to see that there would be a necessity for offering to capitulate. Dessalines having received these proposals, agreed to them, and the articles were signed on the 19th of November. These articles were certainly highly favourable to the French, for they provided for the security of private property, and that all their sick and wounded should be carefully attended by the blacks, and afterwards conveyed to France in vessels bearing a neutral flag. For the evacuation ten days were allowed, and Rochambeau attempted a *ruse de guerre*, by which he hoped to evade the English squadron then blockading the city, but in this he totally failed. He thought that the strong and stormy winds which prevailed during the autumnal months, might blow off the English ships, and enable the French squadron to steal away unperceived; but the English commodore saw the design of the French general, and consequently increased his vigilance, and began to provide against the attempt meditated by the French commander.

Finding that he had been too sanguine, and that it was not possible to elude the vigilance of the English squadron, Rochambeau was obliged to enter into terms with the British commodore, to avoid the dreadful alternative of destruction in the harbour by red-hot shot, with which he was threatened, from the time agreed upon in the articles having

expired. The force which surrendered consisted of three frigates and nearly twenty smaller vessels, and prisoners to the number of about eight thousand men were taken first to Jamaica and afterwards to England.

Thus ended the war between the French and the blacks in St. Domingo, and thus an expedition, which at different periods brought out upwards of forty thousand men, terminated in discomfiture and disgrace; and which, from the conduct of the respective generals on whom the command devolved, will ever remain an indelible stain on the military character of their country. No expedition in the annals of that country had been fitted out under more favourable and encouraging auspices, and respecting the success of which a greater interest was excited. Composed of the finest troops, and under the most experienced officers, a different termination might have been anticipated; but a mistaken policy having been pursued, after the moment of victory, the advantages which had been previously gained were altogether lost, and upon the victors was entailed the odium of defeat, together with the reproach of neglect, and the want of precaution and discernment.

The end of December, 1803, therefore beheld the blacks in quiet possession of the island, after a struggle in which they certainly exhibited proofs of skill and perseverance in the multifarious duties of

the field, highly creditable to their chiefs who had the planning of them, and to the inferior leaders on whom devolved the executive part: and it would be wrong not to express in proper terms, the admiration called forth by the resistance which they made whenever they were hard pressed by the French troops. They at times displayed a great deal of heroism and unshaken courage. Standing on the dead bodies of their comrades, they were often seen fighting man to man with the French. Such real determination to protect their liberty was never contemplated by the French; the colonists, who had been the promoters of the expedition, always represented the negro character as being completely deficient in courage, and destitute of every necessary ingredient for making soldiers. In part this may be true, but examples of individual bravery among the negro population were not wanting to negative the first charge; and although the last may be partially admitted, still time and experience had made them efficient for the field, and the sequel has sufficiently proved that, at the evacuation of the island, the negro troops were in a state of discipline but little inferior to the French, and in point of courage equal. Looking at them in other respects, and taking into consideration that they were men, who before, nay even at that time, were in the grossest state of ignorance and moral degradation, our astonishment is excited,

when we find that in the moment of rage and revenge they often refrained from acts of cruelty and torture, whilst their insatiable enemies were committing the most shocking and unfeeling barbarities.

It is fairly to be presumed, that during the war but little time could be devoted to the cultivation of the soil, and that every thing relating to it must have been neglected and have dwindled into a very backward state, and that this was the case I believe is generally known, for the cultivators were obliged to fly to arms, and were scarcely ever permitted during the struggles to return to their homes; the only persons, therefore, who could employ themselves on their plantations were the females, and such of their children as were too young to carry arms. But the efforts of these were not of much use, for such was the destruction which accompanied the movements of the parties at war, that the estates were laid waste on each side of the line of march for some miles. Every operation of agriculture was therefore in a very languid state, and the apprehension under which people laboured was so great that they thought not of any productions beyond what they required for their own sustenance: having no inducement to look forward, they only guarded against present wants.

It is represented by many intelligent persons amongst the people of colour, and in particular by

the late Baron D——, who was secretary to Christophe, and a man of considerable talent and of the most unquestionable veracity, that the successors of Toussaint had not that influence over the cultivators which their predecessor had, and that neither persuasion nor the expectation of gain could prevail upon them to return to their agricultural employment: and that immediately after the war, it would have been impolitic, if not utterly impracticable, to have enforced it, as any thing like coercion at that moment, when the minds of the people were in a ferment, might have been attended with the most disastrous consequences.

Commerce too had also been suspended for the want of articles of exchange for the manufactures of Europe and the provisions of America, and during the existence of the struggle foreigners were deterred from adventuring to any extent, fearing the consequencess resulting from such an unsettled state of things.

Toussaint certainly made great efforts to revive commerce as well as agriculture, and until he was treacherously seized by the French, he certainly promoted both to an extent which, when the state of the country and the agitation of the people are weighed, appears somewhat surprising, and of which I shall hereafter give a specification. The system adopted by Toussaint was not dissimilar to that which appears to prevail in Russia, where the

peasantry are attached to the soil, “*adscripti glebæ*”; and he acted wisely by doing so on account of his people, of whose innate love of indolence he was no mean judge, and he was anxious to remove it, to promote industry and stimulate exertion.

The population of St. Domingo at this period had greatly diminished; the natural increase had been very small, and the ravages of war had caused the loss of a great many, besides the emigration which had taken place under the protection of the French. The entire population in 1802, as estimated by M. Rumboldt, was three hundred and seventy-five thousand; of which two hundred and ninety thousand were cultivators, forty-seven thousand seven hundred domestics, sailors, &c. and thirty-seven thousand three hundred soldiers. By a subsequent statement of the population of the island in the year 1803, immediately after the expulsion of the French, and of which a note was given to me by an individual who was about the person of Dessalines at the time of his accession to the chief command, the number appears to have been about three hundred and forty-eight thousand, of which two hundred and seventy-two thousand were cultivators, thirty-five thousand soldiers, and the remainder were composed of domestics, artisans, and a few sailors. The difference between these two statements of twenty-seven thousand in so short a time appears large, but the destruction of men must have

been very great indeed during that period, from the extraordinary rancour which existed in the French, and from their cruel determination to give no quarter, but to pursue a system of extermination until they had completely destroyed all those who were inimical to their interest. The emigration to the Spanish part of the island was also considerable; many fled thither to avert the impending blow, and to save themselves from the fate which awaited those who had been wavering in the cause of liberty. The successors of Toussaint they were aware would visit them with the heaviest penalties, and from the known ferocity of Dessalines they had to expect but little mercy, his character among his brethren for barbarity and thirst for blood and revenge being too well established not to be greatly dreaded.

I shall now proceed to take a short review of the proceedings of the succeeding chiefs who governed the island after this time. In doing so, I shall abstain from any reference to military operations, except in cases where it may be required for the clearer illustration of my subject.

CHAPTER VII.

Independence declared.—Dessalines attempts to take the city of Santo Domingo.—Raised to the imperial dignity.—New constitution.—His atrocious massacres.—Attempts to import negroes from Africa.—Encourages cultivators.—Census taken.—State of his army.—His death and character.

THE independence of Hayti was declared on the 1st of January, 1804, and the first step taken by Dessalines, who had been vested with the chief command, was to endeavour to stop the emigration which was going on, and remove the delusion under which the blacks were labouring. For this purpose he caused it to be made generally known, that all previous opinions would be buried in oblivion, and those who had been allured to take part with the enemies of the colony, and had been induced to emigrate from apprehension of the consequences which such conduct might entail upon them, were invited to return to their homes, being assured of protection and security ; at the same time, however, he gave it out, that all those who were disposed to accompany the French army were at liberty to do so, and should be allowed to depart unmolested. This augured favourably, and many took advantage

of this declaration of clemency, who afterwards had to regret their credulity and condemn their own want of foresight and discretion.

To give a colour of clemency and humanity to this declaration of the black general-in-chief, and to stamp it with the mark of sincerity, another proclamation was issued signed by Dessalines, Christophe, and Clerveaux, a mulatto, in which the independence of the colony is declared, and encouragement given to the emigrants to return to their properties. It says, "towards those men who do us justice, we will act as brothers; let them rely for ever on our esteem and friendship; let them return amongst us. The God who protects us, the God of freemen, bids us stretch out towards them our conquering arms." Allured by a proclamation which held out a promise of security and protection, many returned from the interior of the island, whither they had fled for safety.

As a great many freemen of colour, as well as slaves, had emigrated to the United States at the commencement of the revolution, and as many had manifested a desire to return, but were without the means of accomplishing it, Dessalines devised a plan to enable them to do so; but this plan does not appear to have succeeded, for there is no authentic proof that any of them ever returned: it is on the contrary known, that although the emissaries of Dessalines were industriously employed in America,

but very few of the negroes and people of colour availed themselves of the advantages which were so glowingly held out to them; doubting the sincerity of the general-in-chief on the one hand, and on the other, living in some degree of comfort and tranquillity with their new masters, they had no wish to try an experiment by which they might lose a great deal, and gain nothing. As it afterwards turned out, their decision was prudent and wise, for it was no doubt the aim of the inhuman Dessalines to make them all objects of his brutal ferocity, and this was the impression of those who were beyond the reach of his vengeance; they could never be inspired with the hope of safety, were they to give up the hold of which they had obtained possession. To hazard a security, by visionary schemes of improvement is a proof of weakness and indiscretion; and those who had obtained that security were determined to preserve it, by not listening to the proposals of the negro chief. Had such a proposal been made by Toussaint, many, from an innate love of their native soil, would no doubt have accepted it; but a proposition from a man so base and sanguinary as Dessalines, surely, could never have found one individual who would have had faith or confidence in it. It is evident, that he meditated the destruction of all those who returned, and that too in the most cruel and brutal way; such a thing as mercy formed no constituent of the character of

the most ferocious tyrant that ever afflicted the inhabitants of any country. Those who had emigrated to America, I think, would have returned, had the proposition for their doing so been made by any other of the chiefs; but coming from such a wretch as Dessalines, it deterred instead of having encouraged them.

A short time after Dessalines had been invested with the chief command, he began to discard all the appellations which were used in the time of the French, and Hayti, the name given to the island by the Aborigines, was adopted instead of Saint Domingo, and he was severe in the extreme towards any one who might by the smallest and purest accident use any of the abrogated terms. This was followed by a general call on the people to revenge the wrongs which they had endured, and to execute vengeance upon those whom they conceived to have been the authors of it. The white French people, therefore, were indiscriminately sacrificed, not indeed by the inhabitants or cultivators, who preferred peace, and wished clemency to be shewn towards all, but by the troops, headed by their officers, and under the orders of the general-in-chief. No age nor sex was spared: the brutal soldiers, led on by their merciless officers, ran from door to door, and left not one alive whom they could find within; the females, whose amiable softness might have stayed the hand of the savage in his native wilds,

first endured the most dreadful violation, and then were bayoneted and most shockingly mangled.

Military execution is at all times, and in all countries, to be greatly dreaded. It is always attended with those appalling enormities and barbarities, which make it the scourge of those nations which resort to it; it shews not the least mercy to either the innocent, the child, or the female with all her sweetness and charms, but all are indiscriminately the objects of its ravages, and the innocent with the guilty feel its atrocious influence, without being able to avert its vengeance and fury. In Hayti the effects of it must have been heavy indeed, and from the fact of its having been perpetrated by people who were little advanced over the unlettered savage of the desert, its consequences must have been horrible beyond the powers of language to describe. The measures which the merciless Dessalines adopted were enough to deter people from expressing their abhorrence for such vindictive proceedings. He made all his officers assume the capacity of spies, and in consequence, it became dangerous even to speak; all therefore being silent spectators of his enormities, he took it for granted that they approved, whilst fear alone prevented them from loudly pronouncing their abhorrence and detestation of his most flagitious conduct.

This crafty and execrable monster had recourse to one of the most diabolical acts recorded in the

annals of history, for the purpose of collecting all those people together, who had escaped from the military massacres. He gave it out by a proclamation, that as he intended to stay his vengeance for the sufferings to which his brethren had been exposed, all those who had escaped execution under his military decree, should appear at an appointed spot for the purpose of receiving tickets, which might in future protect them from the vengeance of the people; and many who had been fortunate enough to escape, as they thought, in the first massacre, became the victims of the second; for no sooner did these unsuspecting and deluded creatures obtain what they conceived an assurance that their lives would be spared, than leaving their hiding places, they ran with eagerness to the place announced for issuing the tickets, when they were immediately seized and led away for instant execution. Before he perpetrated so deliberate, base, cool blooded, and horrible an act, even Nero would have paused; but the infamous and blood thirsty negro Dessalines secretly rejoiced at the success of his inhuman stratagem.

Another of this monster's acts of barbarity is recorded. A young Frenchman, the son of a very opulent planter, had escaped during the early part of the revolution, with his father and the rest of his family, to Jamaica, where he had followed the occupation of a clerk in a mercantile house in Kingston. On its

being known that all persons were invited back to their native country, he adopted the resolution to go up to Port au Prince, and procure leave to settle there. Speaking English fluently, he obtained a clerkship in the counting-house of an English merchant in that city. After having been there for some time, the monster heard of him, and it was intimated that he was a Frenchman. When he was sent for to appear at the government-house, the young man complied, and attended at the time appointed. Dessalines received him in the presence of his numerous officers, and told him that he had sent for him to ascertain if he were a Frenchman. The young man replied in the negative, and that he was a native of Jamaica, born of French parents, and had come to the city as a clerk to an establishment connected with the house in which he had lived in that island. Dessalines expressed much regret at the disappointment he felt, said he hoped to discover in him the son of a planter of his name, from whom he, Dessalines, had received much kindness, and who had once saved his life; and stated that he was most anxious to learn if any of the family were living, that he might be enabled to shew his gratitude, by restoring them to their estates, and affording them encouragement and protection. The young man elated with this expression of kindness and good will, and in the moment of credulous joy, declared himself to be the son of the man whom he

had represented as having been his benefactor. The inhuman savage with a laugh which resounded through the whole apartment, and jumping, as he was wont to do whenever he had succeeded in entrapping an individual, from his chair, ordered the young man to be bayoneted in his presence, which was instantly done, whilst he looked on with the most ferocious countenance, indicative of the inward satisfaction he felt in having sacrificed another victim on the altar of revenge.

It is certain that Dessalines willingly took upon himself the responsibility of all these enormities; he even gloried in them, boasted that he had inflicted them on the French, and alleged that his predecessor Toussaint had been too lenient and too backward in his measures against those who opposed his cause. In his subsequent proclamation, he claims to himself the whole merit of these atrocious proceedings, and declares that in future he will admit no Europeans to hold property in the colony. That part of his proclamation is extremely harsh, and shews the malignancy of his nature, and his hatred of the whites; it states, as the translation from another author has it: “Generals, officers, soldiers, somewhat unlike him who has preceded me, the ex-general Toussaint L’Ouverture, I have been faithful to the promise I have made to you when I took up arms against tyranny, and whilst a spark of life remains in me I will keep my oath. Never

again shall a colonist or European set his foot upon this territory, with the title of master or proprietor. This resolution shall henceforward form the fundamental basis of our constitution.”*

When all the massacres were at an end, he began to turn his attention towards restoring the country to some degree of tranquillity, after the injuries which it had sustained by the war, and to endeavour, if possible, to remove the fears under which the people seemed to labour, from the apprehension of a future interruption of their quiet and repose. He therefore determined to visit all parts under his command, and to make those arrangements which had a tendency, not only to augment the wealth of the island, but also to promote the welfare of his people, and inspire confidence in his future government. So commendable an act was certainly entitled to the highest praise and consideration, but emanating from so execrable a character it seemed paradoxical, and many questioned his sincerity, and were apprehensive that he contemplated measures of a contrary tendency. In the present instance, however, he was not dissembling, for he evinced more than common anxiety for the reestablishment of agriculture, and held out to the people the high advantages that were to be derived from their personal exertions in the culture of their lands; and for the purpose of stimulating them, he assured

* Anonymous.

them of his intention to encourage an intercourse with the United States and England, in order to open a vent for their own productions, and to ensure on better terms the purchase of those articles of foreign growth and manufacture of which they stood in need. This seems to have been particularly offered for his consideration by some American merchants of respectability, with whom Dessalines frequently held conferences on subjects having a reference to his future government: and it has been communicated to me by one of them, that he was, notwithstanding his irascible temper, very attentive to their representations, and shewed great deference for their opinions, and frequently acted upon them in matters of commerce, when he found them consistent with the policy which he meant to pursue; otherwise he heard them deliberate upon them, and if he thought they proposed any thing to which he could not readily concur, he would freely state his objections, but always expressed himself thankful.

After a short period had elapsed, he also began to concert measures for the reduction of the Spanish part of the island. The city of Santo Domingo had rendered ineffectual all the efforts of the blacks to sow dissensions among the people. There were but few slaves in this part of the island, and those were living in so great a state of equality with the people, that slavery was only known by name, and they evinced no desire whatever to throw

off their adherence to their masters, and join their brethren of the west. Both these parties united in their resolution to oppose the tyrant, whom they equally detested, should he appear before Santo Domingo. At last Dessalines laid siege to the city, vainly conceiving that the terror of his name and the extent of his achievements would deter the people from making any resistance, and that they would surrender on his first appearance before it, on being assured of his protection and friendship. But in this he was egregiously deceived, for the besieged made strong preparations for defence, and determined on the most vigorous efforts to repel his attacks. In the mean time a reinforcement having arrived from France, proved a very seasonable succour to the inhabitants; this induced Dessalines to raise the siege and return to the west, without having been able to carry into effect this last design, which caused him no little chagrin and disappointment.

His tour through the country, and his incursion to the Spanish part of the island, were followed in a short time by his elevation to the imperial dignity; on the 8th of October, 1804, with great parade and splendour, he was crowned “Emperor of Hayti.” His elevation to the imperial throne was recognized in the following year by the new constitution, and being proclaimed immediately throughout the island, the announcement was received with little or no enthusiasm.

In this new constitution there are some things which certainly indicate a great desire for the improvement of the country, and manifest a very strong wish to promote the happiness and improve the condition of the people, and to introduce something like morality among them. It says, that no Haytian is entitled to the privileges of a citizen, who does not inherit all the qualities of a good father, a good son, and a good husband. No child could be disinherited by his parents; emigration subjected a person to the loss of his citizenship, and a citizen becoming bankrupt lost all his privileges; all citizens too were required to make themselves skilful in some mechanical trade. Such enactments as these did credit to the people from whom they emanated, and must in some measure soften our detestation of Dessalines, who consented that they should form a part of the fundamental laws which he was sworn to observe, and by which he engaged to govern. By the new constitution also religion was tolerated, although it was declared that there should be no predominant religion, copying in this particular the United States, which it was the aim of the Haytians to imitate as nearly as circumstances would permit. Marriage it declared to be merely a civil ceremony, tending to improve society, and to inspire the people with a disgust for the unlimited sensuality then so prevalent in the country.

Dessalines during his imperial reign made the

strongest efforts to increase the population of the island, his ferocious disposition having been somewhat softened by the sweets of peace and tranquillity, which now in all parts happily reigned. People of colour and blacks began to return to their homes, and others from the French and British colonies found their way thither, and were received in a very cordial manner, every pledge of protection being given them. One act of the emperor, however, for the purpose of increasing his male population, seems to have excited no little astonishment as well as indignation, and that was the importation of people from Africa. For this object he wished to enter into a commercial treaty with the British agent from Jamaica, offering to open the ports of Hayti to the British slave ships, and to grant to the Jamaica importers the exclusive right of selling negroes in Hayti! True it is, the privilege was to extend to the importation of men only, and that they were not to be sold to any other persons but those appointed by the government, which wanted them, as it has been generally wished should be understood, to increase their military establishment, but which in fact required them for the cultivation of the government lands which had fallen into a state of neglect and unproductiveness. This arrangement however did not take place; not by reason of any backwardness evinced by the emperor, but because no disposition was shewn by the British agent to

accept the offer of a grant, which, to say the least of it, appeared a most extraordinary and unaccountable measure. Some have observed, that the emperor himself was dissuaded from it on the ground that its principle was nearly allied to that slave trade, to which it could not fail to give encouragement; but he contended, that it was a measure of necessity, of political expediency, which, with him, superseded every other consideration; and besides, he alleged that he should be performing an act of humanity towards the African race, by permitting them to be brought into his dominions, as otherwise they would be taken to Jamaica and made slaves.

From a note which I obtained of a census taken in 1805, the population of Hayti appears to have amounted to about four hundred thousand, of all denominations, so that by natural augmentation and by emigration from other countries, there was an evident increase in three years of at least twenty-five thousand, taking M. Humboldt's statement of the population in 1802 to be a correct one. But from the manner in which the census was taken, a considerable degree of inaccuracy must have arisen, and hence the census of 1805 may in all probability have overstated the actual number: otherwise the increase seems to have been prodigious, and consequently questionable. The taking of a census was left entirely to the military officers of the respective districts in which they commanded, and a very

large proportion of these personages could neither read nor write, and no great confidence can therefore be placed in these returns.

Placide Justin states the amount of the census of 1805 at three hundred and eighty thousand, and twenty thousand, which from a variety of causes, he says, may have been omitted in the returns. This is a strong evidence of their mode of taking a census being most imperfect.

Dessalines was particularly solicitous for the encouragement of the cultivators of the soil, and held out to them every possible inducement to labour. The code of Toussaint was enforced, and the people seemed to work contentedly, but not to the same extent as they did in Toussaint's time. By Dessalines the cultivators were permitted to change the estates on which they had chosen to work, on expressing to the commanding officer of the district that they wished to do so, and by assigning a sufficient reason for such wish: but on no other account could they leave the property without incurring the penalty attached to such an offence. Now whatever may be said about the freedom of the cultivators by the advocates for free labour, I must be permitted to say, that no instance has yet been adduced of such freedom in practice, and I must beg leave to maintain still that the code of Toussaint, which was acted upon by his successor, exhibits a greater proof of the existence of coercion

than any thing I have seen, and that the conduct pursued by Dessalines towards the cultivators, though he wished it to be understood that he was anxious for their welfare, was harsh and severe in the extreme, and that those who worked on the government estates felt it so. It has been communicated to me by an individual who managed one of the properties held by the government, that Dessalines, who well knew the work which could be performed by one man, had a regular daily return sent in to him of the quantum of work done, and should there have been any relaxation from the day before, he broke out into a torrent of abuse, and often sentenced the negligent negroes, as a punishment, to labour on the public roads.

The greater portion of the labour bestowed upon the soil was confined to the cultivation of coffee. The sugar plantations having been destroyed and the works demolished, but little sugar was now made in proportion to the quantity produced in the time of the French, as will be shewn hereafter in my general remarks upon the agricultural state of the country, and the specifications of the returns at the respective periods.

Dessalines, it is said, paid some attention to the clergy, although he was but little better than an infidel. He gave strict injunctions that all persons should be attentive to the celebration of public worship, and particularly observe the sabbath.

This was a measure dictated by policy, for the better preserving order, and keeping the people in a tranquil state. He went through the exterior forms of religious worship as a matter of necessity, and as an example to his subjects, but not from any inward feelings of devotion or regard for religion. He encouraged marriage as much as possible among his people, and rigidly exacted attention to it, and endeavoured to impress his people with the impropriety of sensuality and voluptuousness; but in his own person he appears to have been the most depraved and most licentious man in the country.

The army of the emperor did not form a very powerful body. His standing force after the conclusion of the war did not exceed twenty thousand men, of infantry and cavalry. The militia, or, as they were formerly termed, the national guards, were numerous, because every man from the age of sixteen to fifty was obliged to assemble four times a year, and undergo a regular service of training for several days at each period, when they returned to their usual avocations. His troops were active, well disciplined and armed, but their clothing was of the coarsest kind, and at all times in the very worst condition. All the fortifications in the different parts of the island he endeavoured to put in a proper state of defence, lest the French should make another descent, of which they were at times very

apprehensive, and he took care to keep all the provision grounds in the vicinity of the several fastnesses in the mountains in a good state, that the different garrisons might be well supplied with provisions in case it should, at any subsequent period, become necessary to resort to them for security. The good old maxim, that the best security for the preservation of peace is always to be prepared for war, seems not to have been forgotten by Dessalines, or by those on whom the executive part of his government devolved.

Although Dessalines, impressed at last by a sense of his own enormities, endeavoured to make some atonement for them, yet the people, who had so often experienced the severity of his mandates, and dreaded a recurrence of similar measures, secretly detested him as a savage and a tyrant, under whom it was not possible to expect happiness or repose; and any indication of mildness and humanity was only considered the forerunner of some atrocious crime which he meditated. Wearied out by his suspicions and jealousies, deprived of friends and connexions who were often snatched from them, and hurried to an immediate execution, without even the semblance of judicial proceedings having been instituted against them, the people at last determined to dethrone him, and aided by his troops, who could no longer submit to his caprices and his tyranny, they conspired against him, and in the

vicinity of Port au Prince, and at no great distance from the north gate of the city, he was killed by one of his own soldiers, on the 17th of October, 1806.

The individual who shot him was a mulatto youth, whom I have seen, and who at the time of the tyrant's death did not exceed fifteen years of age. He was attached to the militia, and was in ambush at the time of Dessalines' advance at the head of his staff, accompanied by some soldiers. The moment they saw their master fall, some of them attempted to revenge his death, but they met a similar fate: others rejoiced at an event which appeared to them merely in the light of just retribution for crimes of unparalleled inhumanity and atrocity.

Dessalines had been a slave; his master was a carpenter, or shingler, somewhat like a tiler in England. He was short, but very stoutly formed, and capable of undergoing more than the ordinary fatigue of men. His capacity was not extensive, rising but little, if at all, above mediocrity; he could neither read nor write, with the exception of being capable of signing his name. His military talents had more the appearance of daring movements, than of judicious and well planned operations; and he more often succeeded by his own courage and example, than by the superiority of his arrangements. His activity was surprising, and the cele-

rity with which he moved from one point of his command to another, astonished even his enemies. He was vain, capricious, and fond of flattery; and those who were most forward to compliment him for his exterior embellishments, to which he was exceedingly attentive, were certain of being admitted into his favour. His last wife, for he had been twice married, is now living in Port au Prince in retirement, and with a very small income. She is quite neglected by the present government, to its disgrace, as she had often been the means of staying the bloody hand of her husband, when he was about to sign an order for the indiscriminate execution of the whites and mulattoes. She bears the marks of a negress who at one time was extremely handsome, and her exterior must have been commanding: she is rather above the middle size of females, but not too tall, nor yet too large in proportion. The white inhabitants of Port au Prince, and particularly strangers who occasionally visit it, never fail to attempt to obtain a sight of her, as her name and her character excite a great deal of interest, and surely entitle her to the best support of the existing government, which boasts—and it is only an empty boast—of being generous to those who have rendered the country a service.

CHAPTER VIII.

Christophe takes the command.—His officers of government.—Promotes agriculture and commerce.—Petion opposes him.—Cessation of arms mutually agreed upon.—Christophe crowned king.—Code Henry.—Baron de Vastey's opinions.—Commissioners from France.—Conduct to them.—Christophe pursues his system of government.—Petion relaxes in his.—His offers to the British government.—State of his dominions.—Has recourse to a debased currency.—Consequences.—His death.—Christophe negotiates for the possession of the Spanish part.—Revolution in his dominions.—His death.

WHEN Dessalines fell, the people seemed to consider that they were released from the most abject and oppressive tyranny, and the event was celebrated with the greatest demonstrations of joy; and satisfaction and comfort were observed in the countenances of the people, whilst the soldiers congratulated each other on being relieved from a state of servitude almost insupportable. It was no doubt a most fortunate event for the liberty of the people, and their exultations therefore cannot be in the least a matter of astonishment.

There was one evil however which they had not to contend with in the time of Dessalines, a competition for the chief command. He had kept all

in subordination by the terror of his name, none daring to oppose him; and consequently, so long as the people attended to the duties of their station, and remained passive observers of the measures of his government, they were not molested; but after his death, civil war was rekindled, and their repose much disturbed, and consequently their avocations for a time were again partially suspended.

Christophe, who had been next in command to Dessalines, and who, during the period of Toussaint's sway, displayed great skill and activity at the head of the troops under his command, and to whom was entrusted the defence of the city of Cape François, on the arrival of the French army under Le Clerc, now assumed the supreme command in Hayti, and from his spirit and talent he seemed better qualified for this important trust than any other of the officers attached to the government. At this period he stood very high in the estimation of the people, and his humanity, with his moral and religious conduct, had diffused a general satisfaction and approval of his elevation. His bravery was indisputable, as he had upon several trying occasions manifested a degree of courage, which inspired his troops with confidence and his country with admiration. His assumption of the supreme command was therefore pleasing to his countrymen, who were not backward in proving that his elevation met with their universal concurrence, and that they

looked forward for the most flourishing and happy times from an event so auspicious.

Christophe displayed great judgment and good sense at the very beginning of his government by calling around him men of talent, both black and coloured, whether they had been at all times attached to the cause of independence, or, on the contrary, had on some occasions been ranged in opposition to it. He made no distinction; he looked for men of abilities wherever they could be found, and he had no aversion for even the whites (unless they were French, of whom he was always suspicious from their intriguing characters), having several of them near him, with whom he would often consult on matters of state policy, and on his future views with regard to agriculture, commerce, and matters of finance. To these persons he always paid implicit attention, deliberated upon every subject which they thought it prudent to suggest, and otherwise evinced a confidence in them, which in return inspired respect for his authority and an attachment for his person. With one of his secretaries, Mons. Dupuy, afterwards Baron Dupuy, I have had some conversation on subjects connected with the history of his country. He was a man of education and of great natural talents; had acquired considerable information on matters of government, and seemed to possess no little degree of knowledge of the politics and views of the European cabinets. His mind was well

stored with historical information, and he was sensible of the way by which his country was to exalt herself in the estimation of the world. He looked upon it to be the first duty of the executive to devise plans for the encouragement of agriculture, and for the extension of commerce; and he left no means untried to endeavour to open an intercourse with those countries from which there was a probability of deriving advantages, and with England in particular, which he highly extolled. To Mons. Dupuy, Christophe looked up with attention; and although he was a man of colour, which, as some have insinuated, was objectionable, not one in his suite received more attention, for there was not one who could be more serviceable: as the chief's interpreter too he was invaluable, and no man could have been more faithful towards his master.

De Vastey, another of his secretaries, was also a man of strong natural understanding, and a work described as his "Reflections on the Blacks and Whites", with his notes, printed at Cape Haytian, 1814, shews, that he possessed no little acquaintance with history, and that he was not without some knowledge of mankind in most countries, as well as of the opinions entertained in Europe on the affairs of his country. De Vastey is now living at the Cape in retirement, and is exceedingly attentive to the English residents, for whom he has a very high respect and veneration. He is a black.

Mons. Prevost, afterwards Count Limonde, and secretary for foreign affairs, exhibited proofs of a very strong mind, and displayed considerable knowledge in political matters, as his state papers particularly exemplify: in him also Christophe placed great confidence, and to him he entrusted the entire regulation of his foreign communications; and in doing so, he shewed that he confided in a servant of no ordinary judgment and discretion, who seemed to be impressed with a sense of the importance of his duties, and shewed a great desire to acquit himself to the satisfaction of his chief, and to ensure the respect of his countrymen.

With such men as these, and one or two others, English and Americans, Christophe generally conferred, and to their suggestions for his future plans of governing, he generally, if not always, acceded: and it is not a matter therefore of any surprise if the regulations with which he commenced his career should be marked by great judgment, discretion, and good policy.

The first step of Christophe was to assume the plain and simple designation of “Chief of the Government of Hayti”, under which, and not the imperial dignity, it was his determination to govern; and he made the most prompt arrangements for immediately endeavouring to establish a commercial understanding with Great Britain and the United States. To effect this object he expressed the

greatest anxiety to several of the officers of the British men-of-war who frequented the port of the Cape, and to whom he always shewed the greatest courtesy and civility. To the Americans who were about him, and who had taken up their residence at the Cape for the purpose of carrying on their commercial dealings with the people, he also expressed a similar desire; and the latter, always on the alert to communicate any thing likely to extend the commercial intercourse of their country, immediately undertook to transmit his wish to their government, but the proposition made to the British did not at that time receive an immediate acquiescence. Had it been consistent with the British colonial interests to enter into a commercial treaty at this time, there is no doubt, I think, of one having been concluded, which would have insured to Great Britain privileges of trade that would not have been conceded to any other country. Every man connected with the government, and who had any weight with Christophe, considered it of paramount consequence that the countenance of England should be gained, if possible, and that it was expedient that such advantages should be offered as would induce that power to enter into a commercial treaty with them, without at all adverting to the effect it might produce on other powers: but it does not appear that such measures were ever adopted, and it is presumed, that an intimation was given from an un-

doubted quarter, that no propositions could be received by the British government at that juncture in consequence of the effect it might produce in their own colonies. The matter, therefore, remained in suspense, and Christophe began to turn his attention to other important measures for the aggrandizement of his country.

His first address teemed with sentiments which did honour to the feelings by which he was actuated. It was dated the 24th of October, 1806, and set forth the system which he intended to pursue with respect to commerce. It proclaimed certain free ports, and that the flag of all nations would be respected, and property protected; that personal security was pledged; and that the odious law, passed by his predecessor Dessalines, which established exclusive consignments in the citizens of the country, was abrogated, and that every individual should be privileged to place his property in the hands of his own factor, who should have the full protection of the government.

Such regulations were productive of the greatest benefit to the country. Americans and Europeans began to find their advantage in trading with Hayti; and the manufactures of England, with the provisions of the United States, began to flow into it freely, and in quantities quite large enough for the means of the people, in return for which they obtained the staple products of the country, and on

terms that enabled them to carry on a very beneficial and lucrative trade. The people were not disposed for any of the extravagantly rich manufactures of Europe; they confined themselves entirely to such as their means would permit them to purchase, and in no case was a system of credit resorted to; every thing was confined to barter with foreigners, who certainly were not yet sufficiently conscious of the rectitude and integrity of the people, to adopt a measure which was likely to be attended with so much danger of loss. Where, therefore, there was no credit, there was but little if any risk, and the commerce of Hayti was, in consequence of such a system, of great advantage to those who engaged in it, many of those who first adventured thither realizing handsome fortunes.

Christophe had not long been at the head of the government before a competitor for the supreme authority started up in the person of Alexandre Petion, a mulatto, who had succeeded to the command held by Clerveaux, after the death of that general, and was subsequently commander-in-chief at Port au Prince. Petion was greatly respected by the people; he was of a mild and attractive manner, and possessed talents of a very superior order. He had been educated in France, and served in the French armies, in which he had acquired the rank of a field officer. He was a skilful engineer, in which capacity, it appears, he had rendered the most essen-

tial services to Toussaint and Dessalines, from both of whom he received the greatest marks of attention and advancement in his military rank. He was induced to aim at the sovereign authority at the instigation of the population of the southern and western districts, the largest proportion of which were persons of colour; and the blacks in the same division were much inclined to support his claims, his general deportment and his known talents having inspired them with confidence and esteem.

Both chiefs now began to have recourse to arms, and Christophe, who had succeeded in many of the rencontres which had taken place, secured the whole of the north; but on his advancing to the south, and making an attempt on Port au Prince, he failed, returned to his seat of government at Cape François, and began to shew a disposition towards peace and the prosecution of those designs which he meditated for insuring the tranquillity of his country, and promoting the happiness of the people.

In the February following he published his new constitution, in which the Catholic religion is declared to be the religion of the state, and every other religion is tolerated. For the better encouragement of commerce and an intercourse with foreigners, it is declared “that the government solemnly guarantees the foreign merchants the security of their persons and properties.”

He began also to make great advancement in the

instruction of youth, and contemplated the establishment of public schools, so soon as the state of the country should be sufficiently tranquillized to enable him to carry his intentions into effect.

In a proclamation which he subsequently issued, he dwells strongly on the subject of agriculture, and expresses an anxiety, beyond his ordinary solicitude, for the encouragement of that great source of national wealth. He makes a most forcible and powerful appeal to the people, exhorting them to an unceasing application to the culture of the lands, by the produce of which foreigners would be attracted to their ports, to enter into an exchange for the products of their own countries, as well as for money, whereby their country would advance in wealth, and themselves in happiness and prosperity. Being uninformed as to the line of politics which foreign countries might adopt towards them, he declared it to be his wish to remain quiet until they had made their decision, expressing a hope only that it might be such as would be favourable to their commerce, and tend to cement an intercourse founded on a basis of reciprocity.

The declaration often made by Christophe, that he never would permit an interference with the colonies of any European state, was often questioned and never believed to be sincere; but an event occurred which at once proved his sincerity, and called forth the approbation of the British govern-

ment. Discovering that some individuals in the southern parts of the island were intriguing with those persons in the island of Jamaica who were hostile to their government, he immediately arrested them, and brought them to punishment for infringing the declaration which he had so often made. The British government viewed this act of Christophe in a very favourable light; and in consequence of his integrity, it permitted an intercourse with certain ports in Hayti, by an order of council of February, 1807. This contributed greatly to increase the commercial views of Christophe, and became of considerable importance to the Haytians, as well as beneficial to British merchants.

In the year 1811, Christophe was raised to the throne, under the title of King Henry, an act which seems to have had the approbation of the majority, if not of the whole of his subjects who were endowed with talents to discriminate. They were of opinion that the conversion of the state into a monarchy suited the exigences of the times, as more likely to make them respected abroad, and maintain their rights at home; putting it ever out of their consideration that it was an act only of gratitude, that they should manifest their sentiments of attachment for one who had, through a long career of war and desolation, rendered such important services in the cause of liberty.

The act which raised him to the throne provided

also for the establishment of the various offices of state, and made other important arrangements for the security of the crown, declared hereditary in the family of Christophe, all of which met with a general concurrence, and gave the fullest satisfaction to the people.

I shall not pursue my narrative of the operations of the respective chiefs who were now at the heads of the governments of the north and the south, but merely notice a few circumstances which appeared most prominent in the proceedings of each.

About the period of the elevation of Christophe to the throne of the northern part of Hayti, a cessation of hostilities between him and his rival took place, through, it is generally believed, the intercession of the British government, who interposed to stop the further effusion of blood between the two chieftains, and if possible to reconcile them to the government of their respective divisions, without encroaching on each other, or without again exciting that jealousy which had so long existed between them. The application to the British government to take upon itself directly the adjustment of their differences, and to suggest a reconciliation on specific terms, was entrusted to the charge of a British merchant in the confidence of Petion, who, from his reverses, seemed to court a peace with his rival. Lord Castlereagh, the then secretary of state for foreign affairs in England, it is believed, declined to inter-

fere when applied to upon the subject, the nature of the application being such as to preclude the British cabinet taking any part in it. Petion solicited the aid of England to preserve his dominions against the encroachment of his rival, in return for which he offered to place the trade of the British upon a more favourable footing than that of any other nation: motives however of a political urgency in the then state of the colonies of Great Britain induced his lordship to reject the proposition; but it is understood, and I believe generally admitted, that there was an indirect suggestion made to Christophe to suspend hostilities, and which succeeded; for we do not perceive that any acts of aggression were subsequently committed by either chief. It is also true that Petion lowered the imposts on British goods imported into his country from 12 to 7 per cent., giving them a preference of 5 per cent. over those of other neutral nations.

Hostilities having been suspended, both these chiefs began to turn their attention towards the improvement of their dominions, and to use every possible effort for the encouragement of agriculture and commerce; but they certainly pursued quite opposite courses to attain their end; and in a few years it was evident, that the one who adopted a system of rigid enforcement raised his country into affluence, whilst the other who submitted to the indolent habits of his people, and was regardless of

the consequences that would ensue from too great a supineness and inactivity, sunk it into the lowest state of poverty, and was necessitated to resort to measures which finally proved its ruin. I shall offer a few remarks on the respective characters of these two individuals, by way of shewing their different ideas of the people whom they governed, and of the most effectual way of raising their country to wealth and prosperity.

Christophe, there is no doubt, was the most conversant with the real character and disposition of his countrymen. He was sensibly impressed with the idea, that to govern them, it would be requisite and imperative to resort to strong and powerful measures, and not to proceed by slow and easy degrees: he knew that if he were once to relax in his authority, and permit them to pursue their own course, indolence would become so deeply rooted, that to obtain any exertions from them hereafter, would prove a most Herculean task, and in all probability lay the foundation of much irritation, if not of disturbance. He was persuaded therefore, that, before it would be possible to raise his country in wealth and in happiness, an implicit obedience to such regulations as he should deem adviseable, must be enforced; that if the people were left to their own free agency, from their innate love of indolence, nothing could be obtained from them: they would wander about quite unconcerned for to-morrow, sa-

tified with that which the day had produced. He knew that the negro race were prone to idleness and addicted to lust and sensuality; that they were ignorant of the duties of civilized life, and of the ties which bound them together; and it was a matter of the first importance for the consideration of those who were to direct the affairs of state, to devise the means by which they should be taught their duty to their country; that idleness and concupiscence were vices of the worst cast; and that unless an upright and moral course were pursued, they could neither expect improvement in their individual condition, nor advance themselves in the opinions of mankind. To accomplish these objects, he was fully aware, or, at all events, his advisers had made him sensible of it, would be a work of no ordinary difficulty, and that unless obedience could be legally exacted, and the people compelled to the performance of all civil obligations, it would only be a waste of time to attempt to rule, or to endeavour to place the government on a solid and permanent foundation.

With such impressions as these, Christophe and his council and advisers set about a work, which, whatever may be said of them as legislators, exhibits no little share of talent and judgment. His Code Henry made its appearance in 1812; it is a digest of the laws passed for the government of the kingdom, and seems to have provided for every class of offences. Some of its laws are new, and others are

founded upon the laws of his predecessors, with such judicious curtailments or additions as circumstances seemed to require. Those of agriculture and commerce are decidedly such as were in force in the time of Toussaint and Dessalines; and as they were effectual, and tended highly to augment those sources of national wealth, it displayed great discernment and discretion in Christophe to adopt them as part of his code.

With this shield for the executive administration of the government, Christophe began to exact a due observance of all those measures likely to be beneficial to his country. He enforced attention to agriculture, encouraged commerce with foreigners, whom he led to his ports by extensive purchases of their commodities to supply the wants of his government, and he made rapid strides towards the advancement of education by establishing schools for the instruction of youth, and by inviting men of learning and talents from all countries, for the purpose of presiding at the head of the institutions which he had formed for the promotion of science. His regulations unquestionably display sound views of policy, which ought to have ensured the welfare of the country, together with the security and happiness of its people.

It has been often asserted that the negroes are as capable of receiving instruction in morality, religion, and every branch of science, as the people of any

other nation or colour. This I shall not attempt to deny; but it may not be improper to say that very few instances have yet been adduced to support such a theory, and that Hayti is an illustration of the contrary being the fact; for with all the advantages, with all the opportunities which Christophe afforded his people to improve their minds, and to seek for knowledge in the various branches of science, very few indeed have been found who have raised themselves above mediocrity, whilst thousands have been found incapable of tuition, or have rejected instruction altogether.

Mazeres, in speaking of them, says, “The negro is only a grown child, shallow, light, fickle, thoughtless, neither keenly sensible of joy or of sorrow, improvident, without resources in his spirits or his soul. Careless, like other sluggards; rest, singing, his women, and his dress form the contracted limits of his taste. I say nothing of his affections, for affections, properly so called, are too strong for a soul so soft, so inactive as his.” *

On the subject of public instruction, which, the same writer contends, can never be introduced into Hayti, because there cannot be found people to comprehend its true virtues, he says, “There cannot be found throughout the dominions of Christophe ten men who can read fluently; and there certainly

* Letter to Sismonde.

cannot be found one sufficiently learned to comprehend the meaning of the words military tactics, geography, mathematics, fortification, &c.”

Mazeres is certainly not altogether wrong; his observations in the first paragraph are correct, with the exception of his opinion of the affections of the negro. It must, I think, be admitted that the affections of the negro race are somewhat warm and unalloyed; and in no instance are they so feelingly illustrated as in the solicitude evinced by the negro for his offspring. To his children his attachment is strong and unalienable; and he displays it on leaving his home with the greatest fervour, and on his return with every mark of gratitude and joy. Mazeres would wish to sink the affections of the negro to a condition below the instinct of the brute creation; but that he is wrong I can pronounce from experience, not only in Hayti, but in other quarters in which that species of the human race exists. In his second paragraph, he has gone too far in saying, not “ten men can read fluently”; but if he had asserted that, at the period of the revolution, when the first acts of rebellion commenced, a few only could “read fluently,” I think he would not have been wrong, for I do not find that among the blacks, at that period, any were at all learned, or had any skill or knowledge in those branches of science which he particularizes. This is exemplified in Toussaint, Dessalines, and Christophe, not one of whom, at the

commencement of the struggle, had been instructed in even the common branches of education. Dessalines in particular could neither read nor write, with the simple exception of signing his name. All the three chiefs were indebted to foreigners for the elegant style of language in which their proclamations were written; and it is too great a stretch of vanity and egotism to attribute them to the citizens of the country, when it is so notorious that most of those papers which issued from the bureau of Christophe, and from the bureau of Count Limonde, were written by Europeans, whom the former had admitted into his confidence, and who were consulted by the latter on all occasions of importance. Baron Dupuy was doubtless a man well qualified for the office he held as secretary to the king (Christophe), and to whom has been given the credit of many of the state papers of his sable majesty, and I know that such a compliment is no more than what is justly due to his talents; but were he present, he would declare that he derived the highest possible assistance, in his productions, from one or two foreigners who were acquainted with the technicalities of official correspondence, to which the Baron had not been accustomed, and who therefore generally undertook to correct any part of it that required such labour.

Baron de Vastey, who is a warm advocate for the genius and talents of his countrymen, and exceedingly severe upon the opinion of Mazeres, says,

“ See the grown children planning the construction of impregnable fortresses, building palaces, calculating almanacks, possessing black writers, poets, and ministers of state.” Now I really have not been able to discover where these impregnable fortresses, planned by Haytians, are to be found. I believe that when the Baron wrote there was not one single fortification erected from the design of a Haytian; they were the old works of the French repaired, where such repairs were wanted. The Citadel Henry, or Fort Ferrier, is the only new fortress of which I have heard, and that was not constructed from the design of a Haytian, but from the plan of a British officer, from whom it takes one of its appellations, Ferrier. The same thing is true with respect to the palace Sans Souci. The only merit to which the Haytians can lay claim, in the erection of these works, is the preparing the materials, and the labour of carrying them to the spot on which they are built: for the whole of those materials for building which could not be obtained on the spot, were carried from other parts on the shoulders of the people, and Christophe compelled blacks and browns, young and old, boys and girls, of all ages and denominations of citizens, to perform that labour which ought to have been performed by brutes. Young and interesting girls were to be seen carrying bricks or boards up the mountains, almost ready to sink under their loads, followed by soldiers with fixed

bayonets or the sabre ; but on this subject both De Vastey and Prince Larnders are silent. As to writers and poets, I have only heard of those now mentioned, De Vastey and Larnders, except Chandlatte, Count de Roziers, who, I imagine, being something of poet-laureate to the king, governor-general of the play-house, prepared pieces for representation, teeming with the most fulsome compliments to the monarch's virtues, and wrote sonnets to the peerless beauties of the queen and the princesses. Here, I believe, ends the catalogue of architects, poets, and writers of Hayti ; and unless the Baron de Vastey can adduce other proofs of Haytian capacities, I must be excused if I still remain sceptical. I must wait to see what time and a further intercourse with the world will accomplish ; at present but little of that improvement manifests itself which has been the subject of so much praise and admiration. That the people of Hayti should improve, and that society should become refined, I confess I wish may be realized, but at this moment it is very distant from it.

Christophe was particularly anxious to improve the face of his country, by making every exertion to divest it of all those appearances of dilapidation effected during the war ; and by commanding all the nobility, and persons attached to the state, to erect magnificent houses on their estates, and otherwise to ornament the plantations in the vicinity of their residences, so as to give the whole an air of grandeur

equal, if not superior, to former times; but in this he did not succeed, except in a few instances, the poverty of the people who had been raised to their new dignities, putting it out of their power to comply with his demand.

After the fall of Bonaparte in 1814, the ministers of Louis XVIII. sent out commissioners to Hayti to try what could be accomplished by a negotiation with the two chiefs on the subject of the admission of France to the sovereignty of the island. By these emissaries an indirect menace was held out, forgetting that by harsh measures no good could be done. De Medina, who was the commissioner deputed to Christophe, had served in the army of Toussaint, and afterwards betrayed his cause and joined Le Clerc. Such an individual was an object of considerable suspicion to Christophe, and from some irregularity which ensued respecting the credentials of Medina, he was arrested, and his papers seized. On the examination of the papers, it was discovered that his aim was to excite insurrection and disorder among the people, and endeavour to prevail upon them to recognize Louis XVIII. as their sovereign, that monarch assuring them of his paternal solicitude, and of his pledge that they should retain their property and military rank.

Christophe brought Medina to trial, and he was found guilty by a military tribunal of the charges which had been alleged against him. He was com-

mitted to the prison of the Cape, and it was said died in confinement; but no accounts were given afterwards respecting him, or of the fate which befel him.

Monsieur Lavaysse, who seems to have been the chief commissioner, and who had at the same time proceeded to Port au Prince, for the purpose of carrying on a similar negociation with Petion, met with no better success,—except that having been more cautious he avoided the fate of Medina,—as that chief was well informed of the nature of his mission, and was prepared to give a decided negative to the propositions of the French crown; and the rejection of his proposals was conveyed to M. Lavaysse in a way very flattering to him, nothing being evinced like the passion or violence exhibited by Christophe during the progress of these negotiations.

I happened to be in Jamaica at the time of the arrival of the French commissioners, who touched there on their passage for Hayti; and I was often in company with Lavaysse after his return from his unsuccessful mission, and I heard him speak in high terms of the conduct of Petion for promptness and decision, whilst he was warm against the harshness of Christophe. This however might have emanated from the former offering to the French a pecuniary indemnity for his dominions, although he would not recognize France as having the sovereignty; whilst

Christophe would receive no proposals from France on the one hand, nor would he submit to any claim for pecuniary compensation on the other.

After the failure of this mission, the French king declared officially that Monsieur Lavaysse had exceeded the power which had been delegated to him; but such a disavowal had no effect on the people, who were more determined than ever to resist the admission of French influence into the country. Other attempts were afterwards made, and commissioners were appointed to proceed to Hayti, with powers from the king of France; but although they proceeded round the island, and sent letters on shore at different places, yet they received no attention, and consequently they thought it advisable to give up the object of their mission as impracticable; and I believe no attempt was afterwards made during the sway of either of these chiefs.

As Hayti might then be considered perfectly secure of her independence, and as a strong feeling pervaded the people of the north as well as the south against the French, the two governments, although there had not been any relations of amity established between them, proceeded in the work of civilization and general improvement in their divisions, without being apprehensive that their tranquillity would be interrupted by the encroachments of either. Christophe was unquestionably, as has been before observed, better qualified than his rival to go-

vern a people like the Haytians, from his being naturally of a determined and resolute temper, and not to be alarmed by the consequences of his measures, however tyrannical, harsh, or oppressive; and therefore, aided as he was by men of capacity, he enforced so rigid a system of government, and exacted from the people so complete a submission to his will, that the north, over which he reigned, presented an aspect of affairs quite different from that of the south. Agriculture was smiling, the produce of the soil increasing considerably, whilst commerce was making rapid progress, and bidding fair to become equally advantageous to the state. Both contributed to the revenue, making it sufficiently ample for all the exigences of government, and consequently there were no calls upon the people of any importance in the way of taxation.

The government of Petion, on the other hand, relapsed into a system of relaxation which subsequently proved the bane of his country, and ultimately brought upon him all those unhappy difficulties which he experienced previously to his death. After he had permitted his people to follow their own indolent inclinations, and indulge in the propensities inherent in the negro race, he found it impossible to prosecute measures for the advancement of the wealth and prosperity of his country similar to those which his rival had so successfully pursued. Agriculture had sunk to the lowest possible ebb, the

cultivators being allowed to follow their own inclinations. Instead therefore of industry and a spirit of emulation displaying itself through his dominions, scarcely any thing was to be seen but men and their families indulging in idleness, and in those lusts and vices which could only entail wretchedness on themselves, and poverty on their country.

Although Petion had laws, doubtless, by which he might have enforced from the people the cultivation of the soil, and prevented them leaving their plantations, except on those days particularly enumerated, yet he never seems to have attended to the spirit of the laws and have insisted upon their due execution, but simply to have contented himself with the mere letter, without in the least reflecting on the serious consequences that would inevitably flow from his want of that resolution and decision which formed so prominent a feature in the character of Christophe. The mild and soft disposition of Petion disqualified him to be the head of such a rude and untaught people as those over whom he was appointed to preside. Far from possessing the unrelaxing and unrelenting temper of his rival, he was kind, indulgent, and humane. Over a country so disorganized, and over a people so prone to every vicious propensity, and regardless of their own as well as the public good, a man of more nerve, and not so sensible to the finer feelings of our nature, would have been better calculated for governing than President Petion, who,

in the language of a writer on his country, was said to be “ of a sensible and humane character; tutored in the schools of Europe, his mind has received an expansion that fits him for the helm of government, and his exterior an address that would distinguish him in a court. Ill suited perhaps to witness scenes to which his station as a military commander exposes him in the field of battle, the tear of sensibility often bedews his cheek at the sight of slaughter, and though brave, enterprising, and bold, he values more the responsive glow of a humane act than the crimsoned laurel he has plucked from the brow of his adversary. He sighs at the purchase of victory with the sacrifice of those subjects whom he loves: in short, nothing can be more descriptive of his peculiar virtues than the motto of an English artist at the foot of his portrait—‘ Il n’a jamais fait couler les larmes de personne.’”*

The character given of Petion by Mr. Walton, I have heard confirmed by all classes of people in Hayti, and by those who are well versed in the dispositions of their countrymen; whilst admitting it, however, they were not backward in expressing their opinion that he was of too easy and too lenient a temper to enforce those measures which the exigences of the government so loudly and imperatively called for. Through such leniency and indul-

* Walton, Vol. I.

gence, therefore, his country relaxed to an alarming degree in both agriculture and commerce, and he was driven, for the purpose of supplying the wants of government, to means which, although they brought temporary relief, were finally most baneful and ruinous. The revenue arising from the produce of the soil was small, from his not enforcing the culture of it to that extent which he might have done, considering the strength of the population; and the imposts on foreign manufactures fell infinitely below his estimation, from the reduction of the duties on British goods, and from the little encouragement given to foreigners by the diminished means of the people to purchase their commodities. Had he pursued the same coercive system which his rival Christophe adopted; had he compelled his people to cultivate their lands, by which his means of export would have been much increased; and had he enforced from the proprietors of the soil a strict attention to its cultivation, instead of allowing them to indulge in the most sensual appetites which can disgust our feelings, he would have aggrandized his country, and have raised it to the summit of affluence and prosperity. Had he taught the people to know artificial wants, and encouraged a desire for luxuries, he would have increased the resources of his country, and the burthens of the people would not have been heavier. The means for supporting the state would have

been indirect, and consequently would not have excited any discontent; which his successor has experienced in no ordinary a degree. From these sources, therefore, forming, as I believe they do, the principal sources of revenue in all countries, he obtained much less than the extent of his dominions led him to anticipate, and consequently he became greatly involved, and was necessitated to devise other means of supporting his government.

The first thing which was suggested was a fictitious or debased currency, which in the opinions of most people is very little better than swindling under the sanction of government; especially a government like that of Petion, reduced to so low an ebb as to have been without a dollar in its treasury, and without any ostensible means of bettering its miserable condition, or adding to its pecuniary means. Every country has probably a fictitious circulating medium, and I shall not condemn it, or question its propriety, when the country is capable of redeeming it at any specific period, or at its pleasure: but when a country like Hayti has recourse to a debased currency, it is very little better than an imposition. Petion was without the means of raising money, even upon the demesnes of government, for the exigences of the state, so that it was impossible for him to hold out any security to the people, that his fictitious coin would be called in at any distant period, unless he did so at a very large discount.

He issued in the first instance three millions of dollars in value in pieces of metal, a composition of about nineteen parts of tin and one part silver, and subsequently a further issue of a million of dollars in value. This measure of temporary relief proved a serious injury to his country, for it not only enabled him to carry on the business of his government for a time without any calls on the people, which, in its then impoverished condition, was exceedingly improvident, but it was the occasion of a great consternation among the foreign merchants whom he had induced to settle in his dominions, and who from great apprehension of the consequences began to look around them and to confine their commercial operations within very contracted limits. They lost their confidence in the stability of the government, and consequently, as their importations gradually fell off, the revenue fell infinitely short of the anticipated returns.

He commenced also another system, which proved exceedingly injurious to his finances, and I cannot see how he could have contemplated any other result. For the encouragement of the agriculturists, the government, whenever the price of the several products were low, bought very largely of some of them, for the purpose of raising their value, by which impolitic measure, they not only lost considerably by their trading system, but it had a most pernicious effect in driving foreigners

out of the market, who would always cease to buy the moment the government attempted to raise the market value beyond what the value in the European markets warranted. Of these speculations of the government I had some little knowledge in my mercantile capacity in Jamaica, for it was through that island that most of Petion's government produce found its way to England; and on the estimated value of it, very large sums in specie were sent to Port au Prince from Jamaica, the moment the proper documents of its being shipped were received. These measures of the government were exceedingly injudicious, for it raised the price of their products so much above the European markets, that the foreign merchants could not think of touching them; and it finally proved the most injurious system that could ever have been devised for upholding the exigences of any government. Had he enforced those laws which had been passed for the cultivation of the soil, and put all the estates of the government into tillage, and conducted them upon a judicious principle of management, as his rival Christophe had done in the north, all his wants would have been supplied, the distresses under which he daily laboured would have been averted, and his treasury, like Christophe's, would have been always liberally replenished, without obliging him to resort to ways and means which proved in the end so injurious to him. It is therefore

evident that Petion was not calculated to govern a people like the Haytians. His mildness of temper would never allow him to adopt coercive measures to raise his country to opulence; he restrained those who were disposed to insist on the cultivators doing their duty as pointed out by the law for the encouragement of agriculture.

To this Christophe was the very reverse, for he not only called upon the magistrates and other officers to see the law for the cultivation of the soil rigidly executed, and take into custody all those who committed the least breach, but, daily accompanied by his staff, he absolutely rode personally to different parts to ascertain whether the cultivators were doing their duty. He well knew those whom he had to govern, and also that were he once to allow them to give way to their love for indolence, it would in time become invincible, and therefore he adhered to the old rule, that a preventive is better than a cure. The consequences were, that from his system of coercion the calls of his government were provided for, the people individually advanced in wealth and security, and the cultivators, who would otherwise have been in a state of sloth and misery, disease and wretchedness, lived well, and were contented. The condition of cultivators under Petion's mild government, and under whom there was no such thing as coercion, presented a striking and instructive contrast; indolent and unconcerned, they passed their

time like animals without the least exertion, and without a thought beyond the supply of their immediate wants; and those wants being provided for, they again sunk into apathy and indifference. Lust and every vicious propensity obtained an unlimited sway over them, and to feed their sensual appetites and satiate their brutal passions seemed to form the only object which they studied. Disease became prevalent, poverty accompanied it in all its ravages, and a more wretched, miserable race of human beings could not have been selected than might be seen in different parts of the country over which the sensible and humane Petion ruled.

This was the state of the country over which Petion presided previously to his death, which lamentable event took place on the 29th of March, 1818, after an illness of no long duration, but attended with circumstances that excited the greatest sympathy for his sufferings. It was generally admitted that the state of his country had produced an extraordinary depression of spirits, which no exertions of his most intimate friends could remove. Medical aid became unavailing, he lingered, but without, it appears, enduring any pain, and at last sunk under the weight of accumulated distress of mind, brought on by the deranged state of his finances and the impoverished condition of his country. Petion was undoubtedly a good man, and greatly beloved by his people, who valued him for his mild

and inoffensive manners, and for the courtly and unassuming conduct which he always manifested to every one who approached him. The day on which he died the people assembled in the square opposite to the government-house, waiting with the most painful anxiety to learn if all hopes of his recovery had vanished, and towards twelve o'clock at night, when the gun fired to announce that he was no more, the cries and moans of all classes were heard through the different streets as they were verging towards the square.

This was not the most dreadful part, nor that which excited the greatest anxiety; those inhabitants who had experienced the changes which had taken place during the time of Dessalines, and had seen the massacres of that wretch, began to fear a similar catastrophe during the interregnum, from the rude state of the negro population, from their relaxed state of morals, and from a spirit of ungovernable insubordination, fostered by the ill-judged mildness and leniency of the late President. The foreign merchants were alarmed, and apprehensive also of confusion as well as the probability of the destruction of their property; their fears in this respect were however fortunately unfounded, as nothing occurred which indicated the least disposition towards hostility and molestation. Petion had designed Boyer for his successor, who was immediately after his decease accordingly declared

President in the customary form, and took upon himself the administration of the government.

At the death of Petion, Christophe indicated no wish to interfere with the election of Boyer, who preserved the tranquillity of his dominions. Christophe was still pursuing his system of aggrandizement, and had realized a very large sum of money in his treasury, with which he contemplated the purchase of the Spanish territory and to annex it to his dominions; and for this purpose he had actually commenced a negotiation through the agency of some powerful individuals in London. This design unquestionably evinced great judgment, for it would have given him a decided superiority over the southern government, and he could have menaced all their points, and having a larger force would have been able to make considerable impression on their principal posts of defence; but his death, which took place in October 1820, put an end to the negotiation, and established the union between the north and south, uniting them in one government, designated "The Republic of Hayti."

The system pursued by Christophe had become too despotic for the people; exceeding the bounds of prudence, his ambition had no limits, and his tyranny and oppression became at last so insupportable that neither the people nor his troops would any longer submit to his power and caprice. A revolution ensued which began with the revolt of

the garrison of St. Marc, the commandant of which sent a courier to Boyer to inform him of the event, and of the wish of the people to place themselves under his government. Shortly after, the city of Cape Haytian followed the example, and the troops were preparing to march against Christophe who was confined by sickness at Sans Souci. His guards now revolted, and finding all chance of escape impossible, he shot himself with a pistol in his own chamber. His sons were killed by the troops, as well as several of his officers of state who were obnoxious to the people and the soldiers. His eldest son, it was said, exhibited the most abject submission, and begged them to save his life; whilst his youngest defended himself with great heroism, killing several of the soldiers, but was at last cut down and shockingly mangled.

His wife and daughters were spared through the interference of Boyer, who sent them to Port au Prince by water, with instructions that they should be particularly protected, and not disturbed by the citizens; and after his return to the city, permission was given them to leave the country, which they accepted, and sailed for England, where they were received, by those persons who were admirers of Christophe, with some respect and attention. A small estate was secured to them, and Madame Christophe's jewels, which were valuable, were restored to her, and I have reason to believe that

she is in possession of an income which, although not splendid, is quite enough for the purposes of genteel life. She was considered a good and humane woman, and often softened the anger of her husband, who was addicted to sudden gusts of passion, and to the infliction of punishment with unjust severity. But notwithstanding his impetuosity of temper, he was the only man who was competent to preside over a people in the state of ignorance in which his subjects were. He not only possessed the discernment necessary to discriminate between that which was advantageous to his country and that which was injurious to his interest, but he had the courage and resolution to enforce the one and prevent the other. Had Christophe lived he would have raised his country in affluence and in civilization, but his death has sunk the former, and retarded the latter; and the people, now left to pursue with an unlimited range their own propensities, will dwindle again into that condition of ignorance which is characteristic of the early periods of the revolution.

CHAPTER IX.

Boyer elected president.—His character.—Revolution in the north—annexed to the south.—Revolution in Spanish part.—Union of the whole.—Measures pursued after.—Overtures to France.—Arrival of French fleet.—Negotiation and independence.—Baron Mackau.—Dissatisfaction prevails.—British consul-general.—Further dissatisfaction.—Determination not to pay the indemnity.—Voluntary loan attempted—it fails.—Observations on the inefficiency of government.—State of the military.—Naval force, etc.

JEAN PIERRE BOYER, who succeeded the late president, Petion, and who consequently became chief of the countries of his predecessor and of Christophe united, is a native of Port au Prince, and is about forty-eight or fifty years of age. He is a mulatto, but somewhat darker than the people of that class. His father, a man of good repute and possessed of some wealth, was a store-keeper and a tailor in that city. His mother was a negress of the Congo country in Africa, and had been a slave in the neighbourhood. He joined the cause of the Commissioners Santhonax and Polverel, with whom he retired, after the arrival of the English, to Jacmel, when he joined General Rigaud, whom he accompanied to France, after the submission of the south

to the authority of Toussaint. On his voyage thither he was captured by the Americans, during the short dispute between France and the United States, and after the adjustment of the differences between those two powers he was released. Having resided in France some time, he, with many other persons of colour, attached himself to the expedition of Le Clerc, and accompanied that armament for the subjugation of the colony: but on the death of that general, he joined Petion, who successively appointed him to be his aid-de-camp, private secretary, chief of his staff, general of the arrondissement of Port au Prince, and finally named him for his successor in the presidential chair.

Boyer is below the middle size, and very slender; his visage is far from being pleasing, but he has a quick eye, and makes a good use of it, for it is incessantly in motion. His constitution is weak, and he is afflicted with a local disease, which compels him to be exceedingly abstemious. He is fond of parade and exterior ornaments, as is the custom of the country, but he does not display his propensities for them, except in compelling those of his staff and household to appear in all their embellishments. He is but little seen among his people, except on a Sunday, when he appears at the head of his troops, and after reviewing them he rides through the city, attended by a cortége of officers

and guards. He is exceedingly vain of his person, and imagines that it is attractive and captivating, and that his manners are irresistible.

I shall now proceed to notice a few of the proceedings of Boyer after his elevation to the supreme command in the republic.

I remarked in the last chapter, that the commander of the troops of Christophe at St. Marc, on finding that his soldiers had determined on a revolt, had sent to inform Boyer of the circumstance, and invited him to proceed to that place and take possession of it. No sooner had Boyer received this intimation than he made preparations to march into the north. He took only a few troops, consisting of his horse and foot guards, being aware that there would be no resistance to his advance, and that the people were ready to submit to him without any opposition. This was pleasing to the president, who, as it has been observed before, never shewed any disposition for hostile measures, and that fighting was a trade to which he was unaccustomed, and for which he had no predilection. On his arrival at St. Marc, he received the submission of the inhabitants, and was joined by the revolted troops of Christophe; and he also received information of the death of that chief, and that General Paul Romain, Prince du Limbé, had declared for the republic. He had therefore nothing to apprehend from any interrup-

tion likely to be given to his advance. On the 21st of October, 1820, he entered Gonaives, which received him without any opposition, and on the 22d he proceeded for the city of Cape Haytian, and the capital of Christophe, the inhabitants of which had made great preparations to receive him; he entered it the same night at the head of 20,000 men, and on the 26th he was proclaimed president of the north. General Romain called upon the people to receive the president with every demonstration of joy, and to acknowledge the people of the south as true Haytians and brothers, with the usual salutations of “Long live the Republic of Hayti!” “Independence, Liberty, and Equality!” and “President Boyer!”

After the first acclamations of the people had in some measure subsided, Boyer, by the advice of his officers and the chief people of the north, began to make such arrangements for incorporating the north with the southern government as were requisite and imperative for the better administration of the united districts. The troops of Christophe were also removed from their stations to others in the south, whilst those of the south, in some cases, succeeded them: and those general officers who had taken prominent parts in bringing about the revolution were confirmed in their rank; but as the government was republican, all distinctions of title were abolished, and the designation of citizen was

adopted, as in the south. Some of those who were raised to titles by Christophe, and had survived the revolution, were well pleased to be disrobed of the trappings of nobility, because it entailed upon them an expenditure beyond their scanty means. The Baron Dupuy told me that he was pleased with the designation of citizen, whilst the appellation of baron had always sounded disagreeably to him. Noble distinctions, he said, suited those only whose conduct was noble, and who had by their virtues truly earned them. For his part he was not aware that he had accomplished any thing that ought to have raised him above his fellow-citizens. There is reason to fear that the Baron Dupuy was the only man in Hayti possessing such modest and unassuming ideas.

After the events of the revolution in the north, and the arrangements for the government of that district had been completed, Boyer made preparations for his return to Port au Prince. Elated with success, and vain of what he termed his unexampled career of glory derived from the downfall of his rival chief, he signified a wish that his entrance into the city of government should be attended with some pomp and demonstrations of joy suitable to the occasion. Accordingly, those of his suite who knew that nothing could be more gratifying to the president than show and parade, prepared for a triumphant entry, and at the northern gate an arch

was constructed and ornamented with a variety of devices celebrating his victory. But it having been communicated to Boyer anonymously, that some disaffected individuals were conspiring to shoot him as he passed through this arch, he arrived at the government house by a circuitous route, before the whole was completed, and without the knowledge of the populace. He began to make some inquiry respecting the intelligence he had received, but it was soon suspended, as it was suggested by his chief officers that he would be acting wisely not to prosecute it further, as it might tend to fan the flame of disaffection rather than smother it.

The union of the north effected by this revolution, did not seem at all gratifying to the people of the south, as they had imbibed a great dislike to the inhabitants under Christophe's government, from the civil feuds that had existed, and by which their lives and property had so often been in jeopardy.

The revolution in the north was followed by a similar event in the eastern or Spanish part, which took place at the end of the succeeding year. The first symptoms of the latter manifested itself in the city of Santo Domingo, the capital of the east. A deputation formed of the principal inhabitants waited on President Boyer at Port au Prince, and tendered the submission of the people of the east to the republic, and soliciting that their country might be incorporated with it.

Boyer no sooner received the communications of the deputies, than he began to march a force towards the Spanish frontiers, which he immediately followed with his staff; the whole as they advanced receiving on their route the congratulations of the inhabitants and expressions of good will and prosperity to the republic. In the Spanish part at this time there were a great many of the Haytians who had taken up their residence as cultivators, and had made some progress in their little plantations; these with the people of colour formed the largest proportion of the inhabitants; and when the measure of union with their western islanders was first suggested by the leading men in the city of Santo Domingo, a ready acquiescence was shewn by them, and a wish expressed that it should be proposed to Boyer without delay. On the arrival of the president in the city, the people displayed their satisfaction at being united to his government, and he with the same manifestations of pleasure assured them of his protection and good will. Such arrangements as were adviseable for the future government of the east were made without much delay, and General Borjellas was left in command of the city, and to carry into effect those plans which had been determined upon by the president and the people.

By the annexation of the eastern part therefore, the whole island became subject to one government. From Cape Tiburon to Cape Sumana, and from

Cape Nicolas Mole to Cape Engano, the power of Boyer extended, leaving no competitor to disturb his arrangements, nor to attempt to defeat those views which he contemplated for the preservation and repose of his dominions.

That a work of such magnitude should have been accomplished in so short a period, and without even the loss of blood and lives, seems more like the effect of magic than the result of the efforts of man; and so exceedingly vain was Boyer of the event, that he was known to declare that he thought himself like Bonaparte, and that he was endowed with almost supernatural power, and an agent of the Divine will to scourge those who had previously oppressed the people. He believes nothing to be the result of chance, or the effect of time and misrule; and arrogates to himself the capacity of accomplishing any thing which he may design and wish to execute.

After having reduced the whole island quite under his subjection, it was thought that Boyer would take into his immediate consideration its condition so far as regarded agriculture, commerce, and finance; and that he would resort to wise and judicious means by which the prosperity of the whole would be greatly promoted: that he would infuse a spirit of emulation into the cultivators, because there was nothing to interrupt their tranquillity, and they might pursue their

labour unmolested and undisturbed. But this was not done; he seemed to be quite insensible to the good effects that would result from the encouragement of agricultural labour; and his people became so perfectly obstinate and indolent, that nothing could be obtained from them. Commerce also, which in the time of Petion began to decline, grew worse, and as the country produced but little, the people had the means of supplying but few wants: in fact it appeared very evident that Boyer wished to adopt a system of governing different from that which had been pursued by any of his predecessors. His plan has been to keep his people ignorant of artificial wants. By this means he expects the more easily to obtain from the produce of the soil the supplies required for the wants of government: in this he persists against all the suggestions of those persons who are capable of pointing out the disadvantages that must accrue from this line of policy. Finding his wants great, and that he had no means of supplying them from the products of the soil, or from the revenue arising from his commercial intercourse, he was driven to a fresh issue of debased coin, and to the project of working the mines in the different parts of his dominions, forgetting that the finest mine which Hayti possessed was in that soil, the very rich and productive quality of which was the theme of every man's praise. Nothing can shew greater ignorance than considering gold and silver

as real, instead of artificial wealth; or greater folly than exploring mines, whilst agriculture is neglected. The issue of the debased coin must, some time or other, be attended with all those evils which the inability to redeem it at its full value will inevitably bring on, and particularly in a country the inhabitants of which are in that very backward state of knowledge, where its expediency,—if it could be expedient to resort to an issue of it,—was beyond their conception, or the nature of the loss caused by it beyond their comprehension.

Another of Boyer's inconsistent projects was his scheme for inducing France to recognize the independence of his country. Of all the impolitic measures devised by man, this certainly must stand preeminent for its folly; by his countrymen it must be deprecated as a wild scheme which will, in all probability, involve the republic in many difficulties. It is well known that on the 1st of January, 1804, Hayti was declared to be independent, since which period no attempts had been made, or steps taken by the government of France to reclaim it, except the visit of the commissioners in 1814, whose mission Louis the XVIIIth declared was undertaken without the authority of the crown, and consequently disavowed. So that in point of fact no attempt had been made by France to reassert its sovereignty over the island. Having therefore been independent *de facto* for twenty-one years, and

having, by repeated proclamations of the several chiefs of government, and more particularly in the fulsome gasconades of Boyer himself, exhibited an unshaken spirit of hostility against French influence and French dominion, is it not the most unaccountable occurrence in the annals of almost any country, that overtures should have been made to France, to recognize an independence already established and tacitly admitted? Could any man in his senses, or set of men, have been so divested of all reason, judgment, or penetration? And is it not a circumstance unparalleled in the political history of any country in the world? But it is a fact, that the government of Hayti did in May, 1824, send two agents, Rouannez and La Rose, senators, to Paris, to negotiate for the recognition of the independence of their country, openly and avowedly admitting by it, that France still held the sovereignty over it, and that it was to all intents and purposes a colony, and an appendage to that crown. These agents were empowered to offer a very large pecuniary consideration, one hundred millions of francs, with certain privileges of trade over other nations; but the offer was rejected, and the agents ordered to quit the country without delay. The French cabinet had now got the thoughtless Haytian in the toil, and was determined to secure him; and no sooner was it known in France that Boyer had granted to an English com-

pany the privilege of working the mines in the eastern part of his dominions, and that other operations of a commercial nature would be connected with it, than a fleet of fourteen sail of the line was despatched under the command of Admirals Jarien and Grivel, for the purpose of reducing the Haytians to submission, and compelling them to acknowledge France as holding a sovereign right over them, or to accept of such terms for the recognition of their independence as should be tendered.

In this fleet sailed the Baron Mackau, an officer in the French navy, to whom was confided the business of the negotiation on the part of the French king; and certainly no man was better qualified for such an important trust. It would indeed have been impossible for any one to have displayed more adroitness and diplomatic skill, or have executed his mission with more satisfaction to his country: in fact, to use a nautical phrase, he got the weather-gage of the conceited Haytian.

The baron, it appears, was not altogether confined to pacific measures, for on his arrival in the harbour of Port au Prince the fleet shewed symptoms of active work being in embryo, unless the Haytians were disposed to submit to such terms as might be offered. The admirals moored their ships very judiciously abreast of the city, by which means, if hostilities were unavoidable, they might be able to make such an impression on it, as should alarm

the people, and strike at once a decisive blow against their capital. From the untenable state of the several batteries and forts, any attempt at defence would have been unavailing, for it is evident that one line-of-battle ship could have demolished the whole. The appearance of such a formidable force before the city excited terror and consternation; the object it had in view was unknown, and it was unlooked for; and from the weak and defenceless condition of the city, every thing seemed hopeless.

The president, all his officers of state, his troops, and the inhabitants were alike in amazement; and his *excellency*, instead of setting an example of confidence, and exhibiting that spirit which, as the head of his country, he ought to have displayed, to rouse the energies of his people for defence, sunk into a half stupor, and absolutely shut himself up in his chamber, or closet, with his mistress and her children. His officers looked at each other like men bereft of reason through sudden fright; and the troops—those soldiers who were to *brave every difficulty, and defy the whole world*,—stood motionless, fearing that every moment would bring the signal of attack from their enemy. The women and children were sent off into the mountains in irregular droves, resembling the flight of a scared multitude, some with such articles as they could carry, and others without any thing. Upon

the whole it is impossible to describe the panic which the arrival of the French occasioned ; and I think I may venture to assert, that President Boyer will take great care that the Haytian historians shall not record the event during his sway, lest they be too minute in particularizing the conspicuous part he bore, and the bravery which he displayed !

When the whole fleet was safely moored, two officers of the president's staff were despatched on board to the commander-in-chief to ascertain the object of their arrival, and they returned to the president with communications from Baron Mackau, explaining the nature of the mission with which he was entrusted, assuring him that it was entirely pacific, and that his master, the King of France, actuated by the most philanthropic motives, and in the spirit of the overtures which President Boyer had previously made, had been induced to appoint him as his representative to carry into effect such arrangements with his subjects of Saint Domingo, touching the recognition of their independence, as should be consistent with the dignity of his crown and the interests of his people. When this was announced to Boyer, he recovered somewhat from the alarm into which he had been thrown, and once more put on an appearance of confidence and resolution. When he heard that the object of the mission was conciliatory, and that hostile measures might be averted by submission to such propositions

as might be offered, his mind became tranquil, and he at once determined, *and his brave officers applauded him for his decision, not to draw his sword*, but rather to try the effects of supplication on the sensible mind of the French diplomatist.

The next day Baron Mackau landed under a salute from the forts, and proceeded to the government-house, where he was received by the president, surrounded by the great officers of state and those of his staff. The same evening he was closeted with the president and the secretary-general Inginac for a considerable time, and entered upon the subject of his mission. They came to no conclusion that night, but the interview seemed to have been broken off somewhat abruptly and unsatisfactorily to the baron, who was necessitated to demand a prompt decision, or he should be obliged to resort to those measures for which he was so amply provided. The same night, and immediately after the departure of the baron to his hotel, a conference took place at the bureau of the president between the secretary-general, some members of the senate, and himself on the subject of the propositions, and it was determined that another interview should take place the next day at the secretary-general's house, and that he should be deputed to make such arrangements as the exigence of affairs required. The baron acquiesced in the appointed meeting, and accordingly prepared himself to meet the secretary-general, but without any

disposition to relax in those demands which he had made the night previous. The French cabinet, it must be remarked, had provided the baron with ordonnances of different degrees of propositions, already prepared for presentation, acceptation, and signature, and with these he proceeded to the place of interview, first presenting that which was most favourable for his country, and lastly, the one which the secretary-general Inginac, in the name of the republic, deemed it adviseable to accept, and by which, should its several clauses not be complied with, Hayti is admitted to be a colony of France. The ordonnance is dated in Paris on the 17th of April, 1825, and signed by the king, and sets forth, that the ports in the *French part of St. Domingo* shall be open to the commerce of all nations; that the French ships and merchandize shall be admitted into the *French part* on paying only half the duties exacted from other nations, and the same on the exports thence; that the *inhabitants of the French part of Saint Domingo* agree to pay, in five annual instalments, the sum of one hundred and fifty millions of francs as an indemnity for the losses of the ancient colonists; and that when the conditions of this ordonnance are fulfilled *the French part of Saint Domingo* is declared independent. When this ordonnance is particularly considered, it will be seen that France has been admitted to the sovereignty of Hayti, and that

President Boyer when he accepted it, recognized in Charles the Xth his future sovereign, at once declaring himself to be only the nominal representative of that monarch, and by the most extraordinary weakness and precipitancy assigns over the independence of his country, at once annulling that constitution framed by his predecessors, which says, “never again shall a colonist or an European set his foot upon this territory with the title of master or proprietor.”

The negotiations having been concluded on the 8th of July, preparations were made for proclaiming their *independence* on the 11th, and a great deal of ceremony and parade attended it. The people of Port au Prince exulted at the idea of being now placed beyond the possibility of disturbance in their persons and property; but such exultation was confined to the city alone in which the celebration of the event was to take place. Throughout the whole island, and particularly the north and south, the intelligence was received with great murmurings, and the negro cultivators began to apprehend that they had been sold to the French for the purpose of reestablishing slavery. At Cape Haytien in particular the people shewed the strongest symptoms of a disposition to revolt, and in the neighbourhood all was ripening for resisting the measures of the government. Boyer was informed of it, and so powerful did it appear, that he

immediately ordered troops to advance for the purpose of awing the people into an acquiescence in the arrangements which had been made. He succeeded in doing so; but although he discovered the principals and seized them, yet fearing the consequences that were likely to ensue from bringing them to trial, he only directed them to be banished to the south, confining the limits of their place of exile to the vicinity of Jacmel.

A general officer, who commanded one of the southern arrondissements, demanded from the secretary-general, Inginac, the cause of so disgraceful a concession on the part of President Boyer, and declared that it was cowardly and treacherous to the people. The secretary-general replied, "that it was impossible to do otherwise, as the French fleet lay off the city, and if the president had not acceded to the ordonnance, the destruction of the city would have followed, and then what would have become of our wives and children, our properties and the republic?" The general, who was a negro, with a look of the greatest indignation, immediately asked the secretary-general "if President Boyer and himself considered the city of Port au Prince alone the republic; and if that city had fallen into the hands of their enemies, whether there were not other places in which they might have taken refuge, rather than have submitted to the disgrace

of such an unprecedented treaty?" After the spirited declaration of the negro general, it was intimated to him that his presence was particularly required at his place of command.

There were several fêtes given in Port au Prince to Baron Mackau and the French officers, all of which were only remarkable for the fulsome compliments which flowed from the respective parties. The French, who six months before were execrated by the people, were received with every appearance of esteem by those who had taken an active part in these transactions. The ears of strangers were continually beset by persons engaged by the President to cry through the streets, "Vive Charles the Xth!" "Vive le Dauphin de France!" "Vive la France!" "Vive Haïti!" "Vive le President d'Haïti!" "Vive l'Indépendence!"

Baron Mackau seems to have had a perfect knowledge of the people to whom he had been sent, for he dealt out his flattery with no unsparing hand, and the avidity with which Boyer swallowed it excited no little surprise among the French, and became the subject of general talk with all classes of people, Haytians and foreigners. Their noble struggle against Le Clerc, and their courage and virtues, were continually the subjects of the baron's praise; at other times, the progress and improvement in the various branches of knowledge which the people

had made, and above all, the high talents of Boyer, his discernment and discretion, and his many good and noble qualities.

The negotiation for independence having been arranged, it was necessary, before the whole could be concluded, that commissioners should forthwith be sent to France for the final adjustment of some differences which could not be provided for in the preliminary treaty, and for the raising of money by a loan for the payment of the first instalment of the indemnity. The persons appointed for the mission were, Mons. Rouanne, a senator, who had been employed in the previous mission, Mons. Daumec, a lawyer, and Colonel Frémont, aide-camp of the President. Daumec, the only man possessed of the least talent, was taken ill on his passage to France, and died soon after his arrival in that country. The duty therefore devolved on the other two, who were incompetent for the management of the important charge with which they were entrusted, and their execution of it confirmed such a conclusion. Rouanne was perhaps as little calculated for diplomacy as any person that could have been selected—he is a weak and superficial character, a compound of vanity and presumption; and Frémont could only have been nominated to display the splendour of the Haytian military costume, and to shew to the good people of France the magnificence of the court of the redoubtable President of Hayti!

They failed in their mission, for they were unable to determine on any question that was submitted by the French for their consideration, and consequently the cabinet of France was driven to the alternative of tendering to them the basis of a definitive treaty comprising twenty-one articles, with which they were ordered to return to Hayti, and to lay it before their government for approval or rejection. Their return excited no little astonishment; and when the document of which they were the bearers was presented to Boyer, he was anxious to accept it, but his council, it appears, and the secretary-general, Inginac, decidedly opposed it, alleging that if it were received it would be compromising the honour and independence of the republic; for it was a strange anomaly, and bore no analogy to a definitive treaty of peace, but in all its relative parts had a resemblance to a convention between a king and his rebellious subjects. Boyer therefore, much against his inclination, rejected the treaty, but intimated to the French cabinet his sincerity in wishing that such a treaty had been concluded as would be reciprocally advantageous, and establish a good understanding between the two countries. He also pledged himself to conform to the terms of the ordonnance of the French king, by the admission of the ships of France chargeable with reduced duties, and by providing for the payment of the indemnity at the respective periods at which the instalments became due.

With respect to the loan for paying the first instalment that fell due on the 31st of December following, the commissioners, Rouannez and Frémont, seem to have been totally ignorant of the nature and effect of such a negotiation. They appear to have been in a maze from the attractions of Paris, and their understandings—if they ever had any—warped by the influence of French intrigue, for they concluded a contract, that not only exhibited the greatest absurdity, but one that would entail a most extraordinary loss upon their country by its redemption; a loan that has excited the risibility of the moneyed men who had a share in its negotiation, and has displayed the incapacity of the persons selected by the Haytian government to represent it in a measure of so much importance.

Such was the state into which Boyer had thrown the republic by his weak and most improvident policy, and it required some skill and ingenuity to avert the evil likely to ensue from it, for dissatisfaction began to be prevalent. From the press of Hayti being under the censorship of the government, the proceedings with France relative to the recognition of independence were not known in many parts of the country, particularly amongst the cultivators of the interior. Although forming the largest proportion of the people, they had no knowledge of the conditions on which the French had acceded to the recognition, until the members

of the chamber of communes returned to the several parishes which they represented, and explained the whole of the measures pursued by the president. No sooner was it made known that the French were to receive one hundred and fifty millions of francs as an indemnity to the old colonists, and that the ships of France were to be admitted on half duties, than a general murmur of disgust was heard, and the members of the communes were most justly censured for having countenanced an act which would entail upon them endless trouble and anxiety. The idea of paying so large a sum, or even any money at all, for so insecure a boon as that of the recognition by France, was declared to be of all acts the most absurd and inconsistent; and to admit them besides to a privilege of trade more favourable than that which was conceded to England, which had always been constant in her intercourse, was deprecated as a measure which was likely to bring down upon them the displeasure of that government, particularly as the President had, only but a very short time previous to his abject submission to France, most unwisely abrogated the law of Petion which admitted the manufactures and produce of Great Britain into the ports of the republic at lower rates of duty than those of other countries.

Such being the impression upon the generality of the people, they hesitated not to say, that the admission of the indemnity to France as a national debt

by the legislative bodies was not binding upon the people; for as they had gained their independence by one of the greatest struggles in modern times, and as they had supported it at the expense of a great deal of blood, and as it had become indisputable from twenty-one years' possession, they could only consider such conduct on the part of President Boyer as the effect of weakness and that want of energy and decision which ought to be conspicuous in the head of any government; and therefore that they were determined to resist any levies that might be attempted for raising the amount of the instalments out of their properties. In this predicament was Boyer placed, and it was made the more awkward to him from the cry of his people, "for arrangements with England," and "give the English privileges, and down with privileges to France." They were sensible, they said, that the British government would have protected them against the enemies of their peace and independence; but now, from the precipitancy of their own rulers, they were no better than a colony of France again; and that England could not hold out to them any expectation of support, unless she embroiled herself in a war with her neighbouring state.

Finding such to be the feelings of the people, Boyer had recourse to an expedient which he thought would appease their irritation, and once more soften them to an approval of his conduct.

He made indirect overtures to the British government, and afterwards a direct communication, to know if it were the intention of the King of England to recognize the independence of his country, as the King of France had been induced to do; but no assurances were received, further than that his Majesty, for the protection of British commerce in the republic of Hayti, contemplated to send out consuls to that country to preside over the interests of British subjects; and that if the Haytian government had any proposals to offer, on which a treaty of commerce could be entered into upon a reciprocal basis, it would receive that attention which the nature of it demanded. This disposition of the British government was no sooner known in Hayti,—and I had been the bearer of it to Boyer—than the people manifested the highest symptoms of joy and satisfaction, declaring that they were now at the acmè of their wishes. Boyer found it an act of prudence to express similar feelings of pleasure, though he secretly hated the English, and would have submitted to any sacrifice rather than have seen them triumphant in the opinions of the people; Inginac, the secretary-general, was not only gratified at the intelligence, but shewed openly that this was the nearest wish to his heart, and as he had always been much attached to the English from having had a good deal of intercourse with them, there was

no event from which he could derive so much satisfaction and happiness as to see the representative of the commerce of Great Britain land upon their shores. The inhabitants of the country considered this as a tacit admission of their independence by Great Britain, and Boyer encouraged such an opinion.

It was, indeed, extraordinary to see the people running towards the government-house to congratulate Boyer when the intelligence was first made public, and the respectable citizens congratulate each other with the most happy countenances, as they were likely to be secured in the enjoyment of their properties. That their country would now prosper, and advance in wealth and consequence when recognized by the crown of England, seemed to them certain; and they hailed it as an event of the highest importance to their interests and to their future aggrandizement.

From the moment of its being announced that the British government had come to the determination of sending out a consul-general to Hayti, Boyer's officers of state and the people in general manifested the greatest solicitude for his appearance; a solicitude, emanating from a great sense of the importance which they attached to it. The president suppressed his feelings, whatever they might have been; but at times he could not resist the temptation of condemning the delay which

intervened between the appointment of the consul and his departure from England; and he was often heard to say, that he questioned the sincerity of the British cabinet respecting such intentions, and that he believed it to be only a ruse de commerce. The inhabitants, however, were of a different opinion; they knew the integrity of the British government, and were confident that its commerce would not be neglected, but promoted and extended wherever it could be accomplished. Under this conviction they began to consult each other, and take into consideration in what manner they should best evince their joy, and shew those marks of respect to which a consul from England was so justly entitled.

It was determined by them to receive him on his landing with shouts and acclamations, and to conduct him to his hotel, accompanied by the most opulent and powerful of the citizens, and that the city should be illuminated; but when their plans were communicated to Boyer by the *presidential spies*, he had it made known indirectly that such manifestations of their pleasure would not only be irregular, but that he should feel it as an insult offered to himself, as he had not been consulted on its propriety, nor applied to for his permission.

On the 25th of May, the consul-general and his suite arrived in his Majesty's ship *Druid*, Captain Chambers; but as she did not appear off the harbour

till nearly dark, she was not recognised by the government officers, and consequently did not salute before the following morning, when it was returned by the forts, which was the only demonstration of respect offered by the Haytian authorities on his arrival. Nay, President Boyer could not conceal his antipathy, nor restrain his dislike to the English, even though he perceived that the presence of the British mission had a strong tendency to reconcile all classes of his citizens to his impolitic measures. He individually neglected even to congratulate the consul on his arrival; he did not pay him the common civility of sending one of his aides-de-camp to express himself friendly to the object of his visit, as was the case on the arrival of the French consul-general, to whom he sent two of his staff to offer him *the assurances of his high consideration and esteem*. The consul-general of England was only visited by a subaltern of artillery on the staff of General Inginac, and the general was absolutely precluded paying a higher compliment to him by the positive orders of Boyer; by the express order of that very man who would have been subjected to the animadversions, if not the hatred, of his citizens, had not the British government sent out a representative to give them something like an appearance of protection against the intrigues of France. He would no doubt have set the whole of his citizens in a ferment, had it not been pre-

vented by the timely arrival of the British consul-general, when their animosity and irritation seemed to have been softened by the gratification of seeing the British ensign proudly waving from a British man-of-war.

The consul-general, Mr. Charles Mackenzie, a gentleman of the most refined and accomplished manners, and possessing talents of the highest order, received all this contumely with the most perfect indifference, attributing it to a very just cause. He knew that Boyer was secretly attached to the French, that he cordially disliked the British, that he had arranged with the French for the purpose of giving that nation influence and privileges in Hayti, and that any intercourse with England was forced upon him by his people. He knew also that Boyer was not the individual he was represented to be; that he possessed neither enlarged nor cultivated ideas, and had no correct knowledge of the world; and consequently, from these circumstances, he very judiciously put down all that show of neglect on the part of the government to its proper account, ignorance.

It is necessary now to advert to the proceedings of Boyer after his arrangements with France, and to see what steps he took to provide for the necessities of the government, brought on in a very increased proportion by the improvident measures which he had pursued.

In the first place, he called upon the legislative body to sanction his treaty with France, to admit it to have been both expedient and unavoidable, from the situation into which the republic was thrown by the unlooked-for appearance of the French armament on their shores, and finally, by their entrance into the harbour of Port au Prince, before any preparations for defence could be made. No one entertained any doubt respecting the issue of this question; every person who knew how the legislative body was constituted was aware that it would meet with their acquiescence, that no member would have the temerity to offer his dissent, and that it would pass *nem. con.* In fact, there was no debate upon the question; the measure was proposed, and passed three times in one day.

Another important question also, submitted by the president, was the indemnity promised to France. He called upon them to declare it a debt of the nation, and to devise such means as would enable him to meet and liquidate it at the periods when the respective instalments became due. This met with some trifling opposition, but was however carried, and immediately promulgated on the plea that the honour of the republic and its credit would be compromised were it not most rigidly and strictly complied with.

When it was known through the country that the representatives of the people had acceded to these

two propositions of the president, the inhabitants began to express themselves in language easily to be understood, and to declare that they would not submit to be burthened with the indemnity to France, and that on no consideration whatever would they contribute towards its liquidation, it never having met with their concurrence: that they never wished the recognition of their independence by France, and in fact that the whole of the proceedings of the government, with regard to the negotiations with that power, ought to be universally execrated by every citizen in the republic; and when it was further known that an act had passed to compel each arrondissement to pay its proportion as pointed out under the law, they strongly expressed their determination to resist a levy which they were neither willing nor able to raise.

I had an opportunity of knowing the sentiments of the people on this subject, from a communication made to me by several of the most opulent of the planters in the south-western part of the republic, and it was made without any feeling of hostility entertained on their part towards the government; but they declared that the small cultivators, and others composing the great mass of the population of their district, were so exasperated at the concession of such privileges to their enemy, that they were confident that no force could compel them to pay their quota of the indemnity, and that resorting

to compulsory measures would only infuriate them so much more.

The government from every quarter received the most unfavourable intelligence respecting the impression which their measures for raising this indemnity had made, and the irritability which it had excited; it was therefore deemed advisable to try if it were possible to raise one or two of the instalments by voluntary loans, to be redeemed in thirty years, and to bear an interest of six per cent. on the stock at par. If this could have been accomplished, the compulsory measure would not have been enforced, and the law would have remained a dead letter; but the attempt proved unsuccessful. The people had no confidence in the government, and although every officer of the state contributed, and even some British merchants, yet they could not raise three hundred thousand dollars, and even that sum has not been paid into the treasury.

Many citizens, on being applied to, to aid the contribution, declined to render any assistance to a measure which they declared to be pregnant with the most pernicious consequences; for they had, they said, no hesitation in avowing it to be their opinion that the government never intended to repay one shilling either of principal or interest, and that they could not, consistent with their ideas of justice towards their fellow citizens, give their

sanction to so unjust and nefarious a proceeding. They observed also, that as to faith in the integrity of the government they had none ; that under no consideration would they lend it a dollar, for that it was impossible for it to redeem any loan it might obtain when it was fettered with a debt that was too burthensome for the country ; a debt contracted by every species of weakness, and want of energy and courage in those who were placed at the head of the state.

In the eastern part of the republic, the people were much more violent in their opposition, for they openly remonstrated against contributing towards the indemnity, alleging that they had not been an integral part of the French colony at any time, and that they would not be compelled to pay any proportion of the debt contracted by the government for a recognition of independence by France, because they never acknowledged the right of that power to any part of their division of the island. They had voluntarily joined that part of the country under Boyer's government, but not with the supposition that they were to submit to such an arrangement as to pay any proportion of an indemnity which it was thought proper to give to France for a recognition of the rights of the people of the other extremity. This was but just in the inhabitants of the Spanish end of the island, and it would be unfair to condemn

them for thus strenuously rejecting every attempt on the part of the government to allure them into an acquiescence.

It was pretty generally believed also, that this determination of the people of the east was countenanced by the officers who commanded in its several districts, who were not backward in expressing their dissatisfaction at the measures of the president; and the latter found it advisable not to adopt any further means for the raising of a loan in the country, but to try what could be accomplished when the new law for levying the contributions came into force.

Into this dilemma therefore has Boyer thrown his country, and without any ostensible means by which he can extricate it from the difficulties in which it is involved. Oppressed with the weight of an overwhelming debt, contracted without an equivalent—with an empty treasury, and destitute of ways and means for supplying it—the soil almost neglected, or at least but very partially tilled—without commerce and credit,—such is the present state of the republic; and it seems almost impossible that, under the system which is now pursued, there should be any melioration of its condition, or that it can arrive at any very high state of improvement. Any change from the present would in all probability be worth the experiment, but the existing inefficiency of the government precludes the chance of any beneficial alteration being effected. Hence there appears every

reason to apprehend that it will recede into irrecoverable insignificance, poverty, and disorder.

It must be manifest to every individual who visits Hayti, and who devotes some little attention to the state of the country, that the leaders in the government mistake the true principle of governing, and that their ideas of the most effectual way to exalt their country are erroneous, wild, visionary, and inconsistent. They are so excessively vain too of their talents and discernment, that they think they have framed a constitution the most pure and unobjectionable of all the modern republics; and they arrogate to themselves the merit of having perfected a system that must eventually excite the admiration and receive the approbation of the world. With such arrogance on the part of her rulers, it is not surprising that Hayti, instead of improving in her condition, should greatly decline, and that her advancement under such circumstances should be exceedingly slow. Whereas, on the contrary, were the president and his advisers to study the best interests of their country, they would look round for information, consult the experienced from every quarter, and court advice rather than shun it. But so long as Boyer is permitted to fill the presidential chair, this cannot be expected; his vanity is too deeply ingrafted to be easily rooted out, and labouring as he does under the most extraordinary infatuation of his infallibility, no good can be anticipated from his government,

nor can the people be expected to advance in knowledge, wealth, or prosperity.

The only department of government to which Boyer seems to devote his attention is the military establishment, and in this he is apparently sincere, but without displaying those requisites which constitute the capability of regulating the internal affairs of that branch of the state. The standing force of Hayti exhibits at once the absurdity of his measures, and illustrates the folly of his arrangements with France. It is stated by himself at forty-five thousand men,—I say nothing of the national guards, one hundred and thirteen thousand,—all well armed, well disciplined, and completely found with every article necessary for the soldier. If, therefore, his force were as stated by himself, so powerful and well organized, the only thing that can be said is, that he must have been a most inefficient commander, and in any other country would have been subjected to the strongest animadversions, for not having opposed the French force instead of submitting to such terms as those to which he assented. Whatever may be the numerical strength of the Haytian standing army, its disposition weakens its power, and evidently displays the incapacity of Boyer as a military man, although his egotism, and the adulation of his staff, would wish it to be understood that he is but little inferior to the greatest captain of the age. It is a known fact that he cannot, within any moderate

period, concentrate at any given point five thousand men; and notwithstanding their boasted discipline, I have no hesitation in declaring that not one half of such a body would be fit for active service on any sudden call or emergency.

Let us look at the condition of a Haytian regiment with respect to equipment for the field. I have seen several of them in what was represented to be marching order; and what was their state? Some of the men are without even bayonets to their firelocks, many without a cartouch-box, and some without either belts, cartouch-box, or bayonet. Then their uniform, too—that can hardly be described. The coat ought to be of blue cloth, with red facings; a cap similar to the French infantry, with the arms of the republic, in brass, on the front of it, white duck trowsers, and black gaiters. This I say ought to be their uniform, according to the military regulation; but the officers commanding regiments are not quite so nice, not such strict disciplinarians as officers in the British army, for the former are not in the least particular should their men appear either on parade, or in marching order, without many of those articles which, by the latter of their instructions would be considered indispensable. A Haytian commanding officer looks to nothing but his own personal appearance. If that has undergone the survey of his *chère amie* and his *fille de chambre*, he stalks forth to the head of his corps in all the

majesty of command, with his nodding plumes waving to and fro, not unlike one of those heroes frequently represented in some ballet or spectacle. He has no concern for the appearance of his soldiers, and consequently they exhibit one so extremely outré, that I fear a description would scarcely obtain credibility. Shoes are considered superfluities, for in a regiment of four hundred men you will not find many dozen pairs. Shirts again are not required; as the jacket hides them, they are therefore voted as unnecessary and extravagant. Their caps in colour,—for they deem cleaning to be a labour unbecoming a soldier,—which ought to be black, resemble more the colour of the earth on which they walk, and are generally applied for carrying it when they are ordered on working parties, putting them therefore to a very important use. And their feathers, instead of standing perpendicular, are mostly horizontal, because a soldier generally applies his cap for the purposes of a seat in one instance, and as an utensil for carrying water in the other.

I have heard a great deal about the courage of the Haytian soldiers, and such a thing as bravery in all probability did exist in the early periods of the revolution; but whatever may be said to the contrary, I am inclined to think that they are as deficient in real courage as they are in every other requisite for a soldier. High sounding and vaunting declarations of their character for heroism, fortitude, and resolution, on occasions of a very critical nature, I have

often heard from the citizens, but I have known, from my own personal observation, of instances in which they have shewn the most abject cowardice. In ambuscade, or for irregular warfare, bush fighting, or any similar operations, they may be useful; but if they be ever brought in front of an enemy, to contend for any position at the point of the bayonet, or to perform any duty exposed to the menace of even an inferior force, they will shew themselves exceedingly deficient in courage, and quite on the alert to fall back; and it will be seen also, that their officers are not often to be found setting their men any example of disregard of personal danger, or of giving those proofs of innate valour and bravery which are so characteristic of European soldiers.

The naval force of Hayti is inconsiderable. It consists only of a brigantine of six or eight guns, and about three schooners of four guns each, not one of which is capable of leaving their own coast, being badly equipped, worse manned, and the officers quite ignorant of navigation, and they have about five hundred sailors. The government bought a vessel for the purpose of loading her with produce to send to France, to pay a debt it owed there, and they had not a Haytian who could navigate her, and they were obliged to get a British subject of colour to take the command. He went to Havre, and was named “The Haytian.” This affords a fair specimen of Haytian capacity.

CHAPTER X.

Topographical sketch.—State of the roads.—Mode of repair by criminals.—How criminals are treated.—Description of inns.—Accommodations at them.—Mode of travelling.—Value of land in several districts, and in towns.

WHOEVER has read the history of St. Domingo, and has been impressed with an idea of its richness, of its varied scenery, and of its fertile condition previously to its feeling the ravages of the revolution, and now contemplates the desolate appearance of Hayti, will be astonished that such a contrast could ensue ; that a period of twenty-two years having elapsed since the declaration of independence, there should not appear some symptoms of improvement on the face of the country ; and that the people should not have been anxious to restore the plantations to their wonted state of productiveness. In my peregrinations through the island, I was at times struck with the extraordinary difference between what the country was represented to be by the people themselves, and its actual appearance in the different districts through which I had an occasion to pass ; and a comparison of its once fertile state with its

now sterile aspect only excites a greater astonishment, and confirms my opinion of the indolence and apathy of the inhabitants.

The original French part of the island was always, as I have before observed, the most productive, because a greater degree of industry prevailed among the people. The eastern part of the island was never much celebrated for aught but its pastures, and its mineral productions, its mahogany and dye woods, and its cattle of all descriptions. I shall present a slight view of the present appearance of the country, from my own observations, and from the notes of others who have favoured me with a description, on which every reliance may be placed, because I have had their notes particularly scrutinized by persons who are conversant with the whole of the country, and on whose veracity I can safely rely. I may differ in my detail from others who have gone before me, but I have some hope that the account which I shall give will command the assent even of these persons. I shall commence with the capital, noticing the country and the several places on the coast, inland, and conclude with a few observations on different parts of the interior.

The city of Port au Prince, which constitutes the capital of the republic, is situate immediately at the extremity of the bay of Port au Prince, and in the centre of the department of the west. On its north are the plains of Cul de Sac, environed by a

chain of mountains extending from the eastward to the channel of St. Marc's in the vicinity of L'Archaze. To the east are the mountains of La Coupe, the ascent to which commences immediately without the walls of the city. And on the south it is bounded by the plains and the bight of Leogane. It is about a mile from the northern to the southern gate, and from the sea to the eastern boundary about twelve hundred yards. It was formerly encompassed by a wall, and by several forts of great strength; but the wall has fallen to decay, and the forts are partly demolished, and are now so much gone to ruin that they are quite incapable of defence. At present there are forts Petion, in which the bowels of President Petion are deposited, Bazilles, La Croix, Le Marre, Islet, Hospital, Leogane, Government, and one or two of minor note, but they are all in such a state of dilapidation that a salute adds greatly to their weakness. Fort Islet is at the entrance of the harbour, and the weakness of the President leads him to think that its few guns, not more than six, would stop the approach of an invading force; and with this idea he has had it put into a proper condition of defence; but it stands so low, that the guns of a frigate brought to bear upon it would at once make it quite untenable. In fact I am sure that a British officer at the head of fifty men would desire no better amusement than to storm it, particularly

when defended by such soldiers as the Haytians. With regard to the others, I do not see that in their present condition they can be defensible, for their batteries are demolished, and not an embrasure is left.

The streets are straight, running from north to south, and from east to west, and are sufficiently wide and commodious; but the roads are in such a state as to be quite impassable for carriages; and although the government levies a heavy tax for repairing them, and the criminals sentenced to work on them are numerous, yet but little is accomplished towards putting them into a state of repair at all suited for vehicles of any description, and after a heavy rain they are totally impassable for people on foot. The members of government are quite unconcerned about any thing tending to improve the appearance of their city, towns, or country; they seem, from the President to the lowest individual, absorbed in vice, living in sloth and sensuality, careless of every thing, so long as they may be permitted to indulge in the indolence and excesses so predominant in the habits of the Haytian people. The houses are merely the remains of such as stood the ravages of the revolution, and those wooden edifices, which were built since the two destructive fires in 1820 and 1822, which consumed one third of the city, containing all the most valuable buildings, with property in them to a large amount. The city

therefore, to a stranger approaching it from the sea, has an odd appearance, exhibiting nothing but dilapidation and decay, or as if it had just suffered from the effects of some violent convulsion; and there seems no disposition to repair or improve it. In the time of the French the whole of the streets were paved, but the pavement since then has been mostly destroyed and never repaired. The houses on each side had virandas and trees in front of them, whose foliage, impervious to the solar rays, afforded the inhabitants a promenade, without being exposed to the influence of the sun; but the trees have been all destroyed, and only an occasional viranda is to be seen. The public buildings consist only of the government-house, the arsenal, senate, and communes' house, and it is no difficult matter to describe them. The first was the residence of the governor during the French régime, and at that period must have been a splendid edifice. It is low, as are all the houses in the West Indies, built so on account of the frequency of earthquakes, but it is commodious, and commands a fine view of the sea. The gardens are represented to have been splendid, and in the front was a fountain (*jet d'eau*), which had a supply of water sufficient for all the purposes of the governor's establishment; but they are now a mere waste, the fountain destroyed, and the house externally exhibits more the appearance of a barrack than the

seat of government. The arsenal is contiguous to the sea, and might be destroyed by a gun-boat, for it has nothing to defend it but a battery, mounting two or three guns. It contains all the arms, artillery, and ammunition of the government, and shews the folly of the president who established it immediately within the range of an enemy's guns. The senate-house is a low irregular building, and was formerly used as a dwelling-house, and since that period it has never received either repair or ornament, for it is tumbling to pieces, and has a filthy appearance, for the want of a little attention. The communes' house has more the appearance of a receptacle for lunatics ; and really if one were only to visit it during the sittings of the chamber, it would not be surprising if an impression were made that the lunatics of the republic had congregated in it, instead of reasonable men to deliberate upon the affairs of their country. The cathedral has nothing in its external appearance to point it out as a place appropriated for divine worship ; it is a square building, with a single roof, without any steeple, with an ascent to it of about three or four steps on the western extremity. There is but little to attract in the interior decorations and ornaments ; the altar is constructed of gew-gaws and tinsel ; above it is a painting by a modern artist, representing the union of the blacks and people of colour. The figures are two officers embracing ; one is in the uniform of

a general of hussars, and the other in that of a general of infantry, one black and the other a mulatto. The back ground represents a field of battle in which the Haytians have just gained a victory over the enemies of the republic. There is an organ, but a small one, and not at all remarkable for either its tones or its structure. There is nothing else in the cathedral, and it is in fact a libel on the name to call it one.

Upon the whole nothing can be said in favour of the city of Port au Prince; and if it stood unrivalled in point of elegance and splendour in the time of the French, in the days and under the government of President Boyer it is only remarkable for ruins and every species of filth and uncleanness. It contains about thirty-five thousand inhabitants of all classes.

The plains of the Cul de Sac, in the vicinity of the city, were celebrated in former times for their extreme productiveness, but they are now very little cultivated; and passing through them from one extremity to the other, from the sea on the west to the lakes on the east, from the mountains of La Coupe on the south, to those of Mirebalais on the north, I could only discover now and then a patch that had the least appearance of being tilled. On ascending the mountains, and looking into the valley below, the mind is at once struck with the inertness and indolence of the people, and with the devasta-

tion that must have been committed during the revolt of the slaves. Remains of houses and plantation works are to be seen in every direction, scattered implements for manufacturing sugar are spread around you, and walls, which were erected for dividing properties, as well as for the internal division of the lands in cultivation, are thrown down and mouldering, or overrun with the creepers and convolvulus, and various other shrubs, so as in places to become perfectly imperceptible. There is nothing to be seen in these once delightful plains like cultivation; all looks a barren waste, as though the inhabitants had been driven out, or cut off by some scourge, and the whole country had since been a place of refuge only for beasts of prey. The mountains remain untouched for the purposes of cultivation, except now and then a small patch for the production of vegetables, and on which is erected a miserable hut, in no respect superior, in point of accommodation and comfort, to the wig-wam of the North American Indians, but in which the sluggish Haytian will dwindle away his days in laziness, sloth, and in every species of lust and sensuality. He seeks for nothing but what supplies his immediate wants; and so long as he can produce enough for the calls of to-day, he is careless of what may follow on the morrow. Sleep and his women occupy the remainder of his time, with the exception of a brief interval, which he generally devotes to playing drafts

or cards with a neighbour, generally as indolent and as unconcerned as himself. The plains are finely watered; for independently of La Grande Rivière there are innumerable smaller streams that water the different parts, and in the event of any extraordinary drought, irrigation could be easily resorted to for the purpose of supporting vegetation. But this is not often the case, as the seasons appear very regular, and the country in general is well supplied with rain from the great attraction of the surrounding mountainous districts, which are covered with almost impenetrable underwoods, and the showers descend into the valleys, and fertilize the soil in an extraordinary degree.

To the northward of the plains of the Cul de Sac, in the vicinity of L'Arcahaze, there is nothing to be seen that in the least indicates a country in that state of productiveness which is pleasing to the traveller; every thing exhibits a degree of negligence that is truly astonishing, particularly when the fertility of the soil is so well known.

The whole of the extensive and fertile plain of the Artibanite is in a similar condition; and although it receives all the beneficial influence derived from the overflowings of the river of the same name which washes an extent of fifty leagues, emptying itself into the bay of St. Marc, still the people do not evince any disposition to cultivate the land. Scarcely a sugar plantation is to be seen until you approach Gonaives

or its vicinity, and those established in that quarter are not worthy of the designation; they are mere patches visible on an extended surface, and from the elevations around them have only the appearance of detached spots cultivated as gardens. There is nothing like an extensive scene of cultivation, nor can such be found throughout the whole of the republic. In this plain on the coast are situated St. Marc and Gonaives, which at one period were both places of considerable trade, and the inhabitants wealthy, living in great splendour and magnificence; but like other places inhabited by the blacks and people of colour, they are neglected, the houses gone to decay, and allowed to moulder into ruins. Nothing is left to remind the traveller of what they were. Contrasting what they are with what they are *represented to have been*, he at once infers, that the present inhabitants are a race devoid of all desire of improvement, and only raised a very small degree above the brute creation, from whom in their natures and habits they differ but little.

The north, taking the whole of the point westward from Port de Paix to Cape Nicolas Mole, abounds in fertile plains, and in rich and productive lands, well watered, and capable of great improvement, where agriculture might be carried on with great advantage, and where even an European, in a climate almost approaching to the temperature of his native country, might undergo manual labour with-

out any more inconvenience from it than what is experienced by a labourer in Europe in the months of July and August. This is evident from the circumstance of a colony of Germans and Dutch in the neighbourhood of Cape Nicolas Mole having cultivated their lands unaided by the negroes, which, in proportion to their extent, are as productive now as they were at any period of the history of the country. They do not, it is true, produce sugar; but in the culture of coffee and cotton they are exceedingly successful, and are in a fine thriving condition. These Germans and their ancestors seem to have resided in this part unmolested during the whole of the troubles of the revolution and rebellion; and by the leading chiefs, subsequent to those events, they have been respected and protected.

In this district of the island there were several places of considerable notoriety in the time of the French, but they are now sunk into disrepute, and in fact mere villages. These are, the Platform, the town of Cape Nicolas Mole, Jean Rabel, and Port de Paix. The Platform was noted in the time of the revolutionary war with France for being a place from which a great many privateers were fitted out for the purpose of menacing our trade from Jamaica, being within sight of ships passing to the northward from that island. It is now, however, of no consideration, as it contains only a few

houses inhabited by fishermen, who, it is said, occasionally turn pirates, whenever they find a vessel close enough in shore upon which they can pounce, without running the risk of being seen by the crew until they are alongside. The harbour of Cape Nicolas Mole was the principal place for the safe anchorage of shipping in the western world, but it has gone to neglect. The town consists now only of a few scattered houses of no consideration, and the whole of the fine fortifications which secured the harbour against an enemy are now nearly demolished and tumbling into ruins. The harbour is capable of holding an immense fleet, and ships of the largest size may safely ride at anchor, sheltered from the wind from every quarter. The mountains secure them against it from the east, north and south, and the wind from the south-west is greatly shut out by the high land running westerly.

The water in the harbour and close to the town is said to be from five to fifteen fathoms deep. In his negotiations with the Haytian government, the King of France was exceedingly anxious to have this port delivered up to him, for the purpose of a place of security for his fleets, or rather for a footing in the island, with a view of menacing the Haytians whenever he felt disposed to threaten them with his displeasure. But they had sense enough to resist this demand, and the king was wise enough not to contend for it, knowing that, in the event of Boyer

not fulfilling his engagements, it would fall an easy prey to a very small force that might be sent against it. The British homeward-bound ships, during the war with France, were greatly annoyed by privateers from this port, as they passed within sight of the Mole, and so near at times, beating to windward, that it might easily be distinguished whether they were merchantmen or men-of-war. It was therefore between the Platform and this port that most of the captures took place, and lately this space has been the hiding-place for many piratical vessels, which run in under the land at day-light, strike their sails and top-masts, and consequently lie unperceived during the day, whence they again sail at night to commit further depredations. This became so glaring at last, that Boyer was obliged to send one of his vessels to intercept them; but I do not hear that he succeeded.

Jean Rabel is an inconsiderable port, with only a few houses saved during the revolution. The plains of the same name in its vicinity used to be exceedingly fertile, but there is now but little done in the culture of them, and in fact the whole of this part of the island exhibits a picture of indolence too shameful for any government to tolerate.

Port de Paix is opposite to the island of Tortuga at the mouth of the Three Rivers; it is of no magnitude, not being a port of entry for shipping as it was formerly; nor is it required, for there is little or

no traffic, there being but little produce in its neighbourhood. It was celebrated in the time of the Buccaneers for being the place of their frequent resort, after their plundering and marauding voyages in the adjacent seas. It was here that the celebrated Morgan, who was afterwards knighted by Charles the Second, and became lieutenant-governor of Jamaica, first joined the “Brethren of the Coast”, the term usually given to the Buccaneers, of whom he finally became the daring and most famous leader. In the vicinity of Port de Paix there is a medicinal spring, the waters of which are strongly sulphuretted, and are much used and esteemed in cutaneous diseases.

The plains of the north, formerly celebrated for their sugar plantations, and extending from the Three Rivers to the old Spanish lines of demarcation, are in a similar state with every other part of the country, only partially cultivated in the elevated parts, with coffee and some cotton. It is impossible to view these celebrated plains without regret, and to reflect on the impolitic measures of the present ruler, which preclude the European all chance of adventuring with his capital, and trying what might be accomplished by investing it in the soil. The most beneficial offer was once made to him by an American company to colonize a district, by sending from that country five thousand blacks, to be emancipated in the event of their being shipped off from the United States. But he refused

to accede to the proposal; and what is more, he told the parties making the application that the American negroes were too much enlightened to be allowed to colonize in Hayti, as they might intrigue with the Haytians to undermine the state. There is no finer soil in the island for the production of sugar than is to be found in these plains; it is composed of a strong black mould, of great depth and exceedingly rich and nutritive for the cane, and is highly valuable also for pasturage; but even on this no care or attention is bestowed, nor are there any pains taken in the breeding of cattle, for which the whole country presents the greatest facilities, from the luxuriance of its grass, and from the whole district being so well watered by rivers meandering through every part of it, and by those springs and smaller streams with which the whole island abounds. No country affords such retreats from the heat of the solar rays as this. Nature seems to have dispensed its blessings for man and beast with a liberal hand; but man here seems to be but little sensible of the beneficence of his Creator. All those elegant structures which once gave the face of these plains and the mountains around them such an air of grandeur, and excited the admiration of the traveller, are demolished, and scarcely a vestige of their original site can be discovered. Sometimes a dilapidated stonewall, and the remains of a windmill may point out to the passer-by that near them once stood an extensive range of

buildings, and perhaps a mansion of some magnificence. The highly productive and very extensive estates once to be seen in the vicinity of La Petite Ance, St. Acul, Limonde, La Grande Rivière, Le Dondon, Marmalade, Limbé, and Plaisance, are now neglected wastes, with little to be seen but the spreading guava, the wild indigo, and a thousand other weeds and shrubs, raising themselves unmolested on the very spots which once displayed all the luxuriance of vegetation, aided and matured by the skill and industry of the husbandman.

Christophe certainly made strong efforts to revive the cultivation of his country, and he made some progress; but at the period when he was about to carry into effect a more rigid system for the culture of the soil, he was cut off, his plans were laid aside by Boyer, and now, as in every other part of the country, nothing is seen in that district but desolate wastes.

The city of Cape Haytien, which is the capital of the north, retains no vestige of its primitive splendour. It is, however, a much more pleasant and more elegant place than Port au Prince, and the inhabitants are always kind and courteous to strangers, as they all are in that part of the country which was under Christophe; a thing which the stranger must not expect at the seat of government, where the people are quite the reverse, and all spies. It is situate at the extremity of a bay, having the sea to the

north, and mountains of considerable elevation on the south. It is strongly fortified, the old batteries of the French having been greatly improved by Christophe, who left nothing undone that could be accomplished in the way of strengthening his capital. Towards the sea the ramparts are very commanding, and an enemy's vessel would find considerable difficulty on entering the harbour, as she could only do so within range of the whole forts, which are well mounted with guns of large calibre. The only requisite in the event of war would be men possessing sufficient skill and courage to man these works and to defend them. The city is well supplied with pure water, which descends from the mountains, over a gravelled surface, and receiving in its course no stream that can in the least injure its qualities.

A military force of about five thousand men is kept up in this district, under the command of General Magny. Part of this force garrisons the city, in which there are barracks for their residence; the other part is at different stations on the plains.

The trade to the cape is somewhat circumscribed, the country round it being not so thickly inhabited as the south, but what little there is seems to be carried on with much more regularity, and a great deal more certainty as to the result, than at Port au Prince. I have heard it generally remarked that the people of the north have a greater sense of honour and rectitude in their commercial dealings with

foreigners, than the inhabitants of the south. Certain it is that Christophe in his time exacted from his people a strict adherence to their word in matters of commerce, and in the event of a disputed claim a foreigner had a chance of redress. Not so in Port au Prince, where, if a foreigner have a demand against a Haytian, it is ten to one against his getting any redress, and fifty to one against his getting paid.

Christophe, who always shewed a very great attention and respect for the British merchants and British subjects at the cape, or in any other part of his dominions, erected a very neat house on an elevation near the city, and furnished it somewhat elegantly, in which he had put up billiard tables, expressly as a place of resort for them, and of the whole he made them a present, with his pledge that no person of the country should be permitted to disturb them, nor should the premises be used by his people at any time or for any purposes.

At no great distance from the city of Cape Haytien were those two stupendous works of Christophe, his palace of Sans Souci and the Citadel Henry, or Fort Ferrier, the construction of which shews no little labour and design, and the expense of their erection must have exceeded any thing that can be imagined as the cost of modern works. I cannot describe them better than by quoting the account given of them by a native of Hayti, in his narrative of Christophe's

elevation to the throne. "The Citadel Henry," he says, "that palladium of liberty, that majestic bulwark of independence, that monument of the greatness, and of the vast combinations of a Henry, is built on the lofty summit of one of the highest mountains in the island, whence you may discover to the left the island of Tortuga, and the reflection of its beautiful canal; in front, the gentle risings, with the city of Cape Henry, its roadstead, and the vast expanse of the ocean; on the right, La Grange, Monte Christi, the city of Fort Royal, Mancheneel Bay, and the surrounding hills. The eye is gratified with the prospect of the beautiful plain, and the magnificent carpet of verdure spread before it. At the back, the extended chain of mountains seems as it were the frame to this enchanting picture. The position fortified by nature, and to which art has added all its science, with casemates and bomb proofs, has secured it from being successfully besieged, while the mouths of cannon overtop the elevation of the high ground, and command the adjacent territory, affording protection to the whole north, and indeed to Hayti itself, this being the most formidable defence it possesses."*

On the subject of this fort, I have before stated that it was built under the directions of an individual said to have been a Scotchman, of the name of

* P. Saunders.

Ferrier, from whom it takes the appellation of Fort Ferrier.

Of the magnificence of the palace of Sans Souci, I shall give the description of Saunders, as conveying an idea of what it was. “Sans Souci, a town rising into preference, and likely to become the capital of Hayti, has been established. Ravines have been filled up, mountains levelled, and public roads laid out. This superb royal palace, the glory of Hayti, is carried up to a great elevation. The beauty and durability of its construction, its sumptuous apartments, all with inlaid work, and lined with the most beautiful and rarest tapestry, which was amassed at a great expense, and with particular care in the selection; the furniture and elegant tapestry, selected with good taste; the gardens arranged with a just symmetry, through which meanders a pure stream, having a degree of freshness that particularly characterizes it, the jets d'eau, the fruit trees, and European productions, &c. &c., combine to embellish the retreat of a hero, and to attract the admiration of strangers; whilst a church, whose noble dome agreeably points out the richness of its architecture, and other public establishments, such as arsenals, dock-yards, and barracks, have sprung up around in spite of the ravages of war. To see the astonishing activity diffused in all these works, one would say that the greatest tranquillity had prevailed, and that it was the hand of peace which

brought them to perfection! Immense treasures, the fruits of economy in the public administration of finances, fill the spacious coffers of the Citadel Henry." "I know it", he says again, "to be one of the intentions of our king to have the rotunda of his palace in the citadel paved and lined with quadruples. He is rich enough to do this."

The palace of Sans Souci was certainly (from the accounts given of it by many individuals now in Hayti, and who have often been admitted to the levées of King Christophe) upon a most magnificent scale; and in elegance of structure, as well as the durability of its materials, but little, if at all inferior to some of the most admired edifices of Europe. Christophe was lavish of his money in the building of this palace as well as the citadel, and whilst they were being erected, he acted with great severity towards his people, whom he compelled to carry the materials to the spot, neither age nor sex, except the decrepid and the very young, being spared.

Christophe was once visited in this palace by an officer of the British navy, and a relative of a right honourable gentleman high in his Majesty's councils, to whom he shewed great attention and courtesy, and expressed great satisfaction at being honoured with the calls of British subjects who occasionally touched at the cape. In a conversation with this distinguished officer on the subject of this stupendous palace, he said, "that his intentions were

to ornament the walls with gold, and that the floors should be laid with silver, that the ambassadors of the world, should any be sent to him, might see how splendidly a western monarch could live."

Fort Ferrier can be easily seen from the sea, and ships outward-bound for any of the western ports, sailing along the north side of the island, have a good view of it from its amazing elevation, the stone of which it is built being so very white as to make it a most excellent land-mark. The palace however cannot be discerned, and since the death of Christophe, it has been mostly destroyed, nothing but the walls being left. All the beautiful carved-work wainscoting has been taken from it, the mahogany floor torn up, and the whole burnt by the people; and nothing remains except the outworks, which are converted into apartments for the military who are stationed there.

Beyond the Massacre, in the old Spanish territory, and on the banks of the Yague, the country is exceedingly productive, but quite neglected. It is only a few years since that a very considerable trade was carried on between Jamaica and Monte Christi, and Puerto de Plata; the produce of those fine valleys on each bank of the river, as well as of the fertile plains of La Vega Real, always found a ready market in the different ports of that island. Tobacco, rice, Indian corn, beans and peas, peculiar to the West Indies, and in great request as food for the

negroes, were exported in large quantities, as were also horned cattle, mahogany, dye-wood, and often poultry. In return, the people took rum, salted provisions, ironmongery, cotton goods of a coarse quality, blue Yorkshire baize, Osnaburgs, and a variety of other articles required for the labourers in wood-cutting and agriculture. The annexation of the Spanish part to the republic stopped this intercourse, and consequently the finest vent for the disposing of the produce of their industry became shut, and having no other intercourse, the demand has entirely ceased. There is no encouragement therefore left for husbandry, and all those lands which were before appropriated exclusively to the raising of the several articles which I have before enumerated, are now uncultivated, with the exception of mere patches where vegetables are raised for the immediate wants of the people.

The town of Monte Christi is a place of little resort, its trade having been ruined by the restrictive laws in force in the West Indies. It stands at the extremity of the promontory on the north branch of the Yague. Occasionally American vessels call in, and barter their provisions for mahogany and dye-woods, and sometimes take tobacco, the quality of which is much finer and milder than that of the United States. Contiguous to the river, and particularly on its southern bank, the country abounds with mahogany and dye-woods, and in the mountains,

mines were said to exist, containing gold and silver and other valuable ore. But very recently a company formed in London for the purpose of exploring them, found that the undertaking would be attended with a considerable waste of capital, without the possibility of obtaining returns likely to compensate the outlay of the experiment. There is great reason to doubt the representations that were made by the Haytian government on the subject of these mines, when they appeared so anxious to have them worked; their sanguine assurances of ultimate success were only intended to delude, as they could not seriously expect that any beneficial result would attend these operations.

To the eastward, beyond the town of Santiago, are the plains of La Vega Real, celebrated for their extreme verdure and fertility. They are in a great measure inclosed by the surrounding hills, which form an appearance not unlike an amphitheatre. These plains are capable of producing, were they properly tilled, every description of tropical plants, and in the elevated parts there is every reason to believe that European grain might easily be raised. The temperature of this district makes it a most congenial spot for all sorts of agricultural labour, and the culture of the soil would be rewarded with an ample harvest. The whole of the plains are well watered by innumerable small streams, which, flowing from different parts of the mountains, empty

themselves into the Yuna. This river, in its course to the bay of Sumana, is exceedingly convenient for the wood-cutters who float their mahogany and dye-woods down it into the bay, for the purpose of sale and shipping.

Sumana, which appears as if it were detached from the main land, is a peninsula, and may be said to be nearly uninhabited. A few American free persons of colour have emigrated thither from the United States, for the purpose of cultivation; but they have greatly diminished since their arrival, numbers clandestinely leaving it, finding that the assurances held out to them by the Haytian government were only made for the purpose of deluding them to form a settlement. It is a low and swampy situation, and not likely to be an eligible place for colonization, as fevers and agues are exceedingly prevalent. Notwithstanding all these unfavourable consequences, Bonaparte planned a new city about the middle of the peninsula, to be called Napoleon; for this purpose, I am inclined to think that a survey was taken, but the design was finally given up. The bay of Sumana is very capacious, and affords a most delightful anchorage for shipping; and it may be justly denominated the key to the Mona Passage, as all ships passing from the north through the passage must be perceived by the vessels at anchor in the bay.

There is nothing remarkable in the south-cast

end of the island from the city of Santo Domingo to Higüey, with the exception of the extensive plains of Los Llanos, through which the traveller passes to Scibo, and thence to Higüey. These plains have been well described by Mr. Walton in his history of the Spanish colonies, and at the period of his residence in the island, they were without doubt the most delightful pastures in the western world. That writer says, “these astonishing plains constitute almost a sixth of the island, extending nearly to the east end, a distance of more than ninety miles, on a width of about thirty. On them cattle of more than a hundred owners pasture in herds, and are collected, counted, and the young branded at the season when the calf cannot mistake its mother. The dexterity with which the herdsman on horseback with a lance in his hand separates one of his master’s brand from the rest, is wonderful. In the dry season when the blade is long and rank, it is customary to burn all the grass on the plains, which serves as an annual manure; for in that season the cattle generally take to the forests in search of the herbage which the sun has not had the power to parch. The operation of burning is performed by setting fire to the most eastern part of the tract, whence the wind regularly blows; it spreads in long and succeeding volumes, frequently making the traveller recede, and effacing the path through which he has been accustomed to journey.”

(will authenticate facts)

Subsequently to the repossession of the eastern part by the Spaniards on the expulsion of the French by General Carmichael, a very extensive trade in cattle was carried on with the island of Jamaica, which continued until the union with the west, when the intercourse was restricted, and, consequently, the breeding of cattle has not been so much attended to as formerly, as they have only their internal consumption to take them off. Many are now killed for the skin and tallow; when the meat is jerked, and the Spaniards from the continent of South America purchase it and ship it to the Havanna, where it is in great request for the slaves, and is called Tassaja.

The town of Higüey was once of some note from the riches and magnificence of its church, which it appears escaped the ravages of the revolution, and was not visited by those sacrilegious wretches, who devoted all edifices to destruction that had once been the resort of the white inhabitants of the island. The people formerly used to go on a pilgrimage to the shrine of the Virgin in this church from all parts of the island; but a few only now undertake it. The Virgin therefore has become poor, and the monks who used to officiate are reduced to great shifts for an existence. I know not if this be a mark of improvement in the Haytians; at all events, there seems to be less superstition and bigotry: a little, however, is still left amongst the females. I

knew one instance of a female at Port au Prince who undertook a pilgrimage to the shrine of the virgin. She went by water to the city of Santo Domingo; and on her voyage thither was in great danger of being lost; but far from being alarmed, she considered it as part of the penance she had to perform before she invoked the saint for a remission of her sins, and therefore exulted at her good luck in meeting with such a disaster on her way.

The city of Santo Domingo, being, I believe, the oldest city in the republic, has been described by Walton as having been exceedingly strong, regularly built, and well fortified, and as containing many public edifices of note. Having since his time gone greatly into decay, it has declined in consequence, as well as in its commercial character; and it is remarkable, that in every place in which Haytian influence predominates, commercial enterprise, and every other good quality appertaining to man, is sure to sink to the lowest ebb. This may appear extraordinary, but it is true, and the city of Santo Domingo is an example of what I now write; for at this moment it certainly is in a state of inconceivable misery, and the greatest poverty and wretchedness prevail amongst the people. No place in the republic is better situated for commerce, were the people and the government disposed to encourage it; but no such disposition is manifested by either: and those merchants, who

formerly had extensive dealings with the Spanish Main, have thought it adviseable to leave it and take up their abode in a country where they are likely to receive some encouragement, and may be able to invest their capital, with some chance of receiving an equivalent return for their industry.

The city is nearly a mile in circumference, and at this time does not contain above fourteen thousand inhabitants, although in the time of the Spaniards, including its attached district, it contained twenty-two thousand, and yet the population is said by the government to have increased exceedingly.

The harbour of Santo Domingo is a very indifferent one, being too much exposed to the south winds, but the ground is good for holding. It was in this harbour that Admiral Sir John Duckworth defeated a French squadron in the beginning of 1806. They were at anchor nearly under the walls of the city, from the batteries of which they received some protection; but the British were not to be intimidated. Putting every obstacle at defiance, they boldly entered, attacked the French line in succession, and obtained a decisive victory, taking and destroying the greatest part.

The river Ozama, which washes the eastern side of the city, is a strong and wide stream, and is of great advantage to it, as it not only carries off a great deal of the decayed animal and vegetable

matter that is at times to be found in the vicinity, but offers great facilities for floating down timber and for carrying provisions and produce from the interior of the country.

To the westward of the city of Santo Domingo as far as Jacmel, the whole country is very little inhabited, although it is most beautifully picturesque, and affords every encouragement to the cultivator from the extreme richness of its soil. The bay of Ocoa has several convenient anchorages for shipping, and it is here that the largest quantity of mahogany and dye-woods is shipped for Europe and the United States; and formerly cattle were purchased, of which the supply was extensive and the prices exceedingly cheap. The Neyva, a river which has its source in the mountains of Cibas, and runs through a very rich and delightfully romantic district, emptying itself into a bay of the same name, receives vessels of small draught of water, for the purpose of conveying the products of the country on its banks to Jacmel for a market. In the neighbourhood of the banks of the Neyva are many remains of sugar settlements. This district is well watered, and occasionally shaded from the power of the sun; and as the soil is strong, it must have been highly productive in sugar as well as congenial for the breeding of cattle: nothing can exceed its verdure, and its fertility is generally admitted. The palmetto, or mountain-cabbage, grows

in this district in a most flourishing state, demonstrating the richness of the soil, as this vegetable will not arrive at very high perfection except in tracts of country where the soil possesses great nutritive powers as well as a moderate degree of moisture.

From the Neyva to the west of the peninsula at Cape Tiburon the only places now of any trade or of the least note, are Jacmel and Aux Cases. Jacmel was formerly a place of great trade from its situation, being so immediately convenient for carrying on an intercourse with the Spanish ports of the island, and likewise with the Spanish ports in South America; it had also a communication with Jamaica, which was valuable to it, but the restriction annihilated this branch of its commerce; and as the intercourse with South America subsided when the revolution in that country commenced, it lost its commerce altogether, and it is now a poor inconsiderable place, without trade, and without inhabitants of any respectability or means. The vicinity of Jacmel was never much celebrated for the extent of its cultivation, though in proportion to its means the returns to the cultivator seemed to meet his expectations. Sugar and coffee were the principal articles of growth; some cotton and a small proportion of indigo were also produced. Scarcely any thing is now produced except coffee, and but little of that commodity. The intermediate places to

Aux Cases are now nearly neglected, Aquin being the only one now frequented ; and there are only a few inhabitants, such as fishermen, who carry on a kind of contraband trade in coffee to avoid the export duty, which can be done in these quarters easily enough, the officers of the customs being so ill paid by the government, that they are necessitated to make up the deficiency by participating in the profit of defrauding the revenue over which they are placed as guardians.

Aux Cases is a place of some trade and a port from which is shipped a large portion of the produce of this part of the country. In the neighbourhood of Aux Cases the soil is exceedingly productive, and to the cultivator used to return as much as any other part of the island, requiring at the same time less labour and less means ; but now, however, like its adjoining districts, it has gone into great neglect, and exhibits on the face of it that relaxation in the culture which is so general throughout the republic. Indeed in the whole of this part the sugar cane is but little planted ; in fact, with the exception of an instance or two in which English gentlemen happen to hold property in trust, the cane plantations are but little attended to ; they are allowed to go on years in succession without cleaning, without manure, or any other requisite to render them productive. There are several British houses in Aux Cases who used to carry on an extensive

trade with the interior, and with the Spanish Main and Jamaica, but they have sustained considerable losses by the Haytians; and the restriction precluding an intercourse with other islands, they have only the chance of adventuring to the South American ports, and this only has been permitted recently by an act of the legislative body; for of late years goods exported received no drawback, but were subjected to the full duties, unless they were exported within six months, when they only paid half duties, or six per cent. But even this permission cannot benefit the merchant here, the trade direct to the Spanish Main supplying that market so abundantly, that the chance of an advantageous speculation is but very doubtful.

The whole of this vicinity and the district southward of the mountains of La Hotte, may be said to present the finest field for agricultural operations. A rich and nutritive soil, a congenial climate, and fine, refreshing, and seasonable rains, with a plentiful supply of water, all co-operating, hold out to the cultivator the greatest encouragement to exert his skill and industry, and to avail himself of those gifts which the hand of Providence has so liberally dispensed. But in the Haytian no such energy must be expected; nothing requiring the least effort of the mind or exertion of the body will rouse the energy of that slothful and inactive being, who idles away his time, careless of the consequences that may spring from

his negligence and his irresistible desire for repose and quietude. In fact, I fear that nothing can be done that can prove effectual in stimulating the Haytian; it would be a task of no little labour to lead him; to drive him, would perhaps endanger the state.

From Aux Cases through the country by Cape Tiburon to Jeremie, cultivation appears generally in a very backward state. The passing traveller sees nothing to attract him, except now and then an object which reminds him that the vicinity was once the scene of great havoc and desolation, and that all that was valuable and useful had been destroyed by some general convulsion. The remains of habitations, remnants of walls, and scattered implements of tropical labour, are to be seen in all directions. Here an iron boiler, half buried in the surface; there an old iron shaft of a mill, or some other part of the apparatus for the manufacture of sugar, and often a dismounted cannon, arrest the attention of the traveller as the wretched memorials of a devastating war.

In the district of Jeremie, which produced at one period large crops of coffee, cocoa, indigo, and cotton, but few symptoms of agricultural industry are visible. The finest plantations of the French are now totally obscured and overspread with the creeper, the windband, and numberless other species of indigenous weeds. In vain does the traveller look for

those settlements which wore the gay appearance of culture, and for those plantations that enriched the proprietors, and placed them in that ease and affluence to which their industry and their perseverance so justly entitled them. Instead of such a scene, the whole country, as we approach towards the capital, exhibits nothing but neglect and waste, and their concomitants, poverty and wretchedness.

The plains Leogane, which once excited the admiration of travellers, and formed the scene of so much contention during the heat of the rebellion, are partially cultivated, and on the elevations that surround them a patch is in some places selected by a settler for the raising of vegetables for his own consumption; but I could perceive nothing which indicated a regular scene of cultivation, or which had the appearance of a system of agriculture likely to be beneficial to the proprietor of the soil. This state of things appears however not confined to a particular district; there is a similarity of negligence throughout the whole of the republic, and it would be an invidious distinction to select one part as worse than another.

Nothing can be more laborious, nor more inconvenient and unpleasant, than travelling in Hayti, from the state of the roads, from the want of inns for accommodation, and from the innumerable rivers and streams over which the traveller has to pass, and which, at all seasons, he is obliged to ford, often swimming his horse, and exposed to great danger

from the rapidity and force of the current (to say nothing of being nearly up to his shoulders in water). There are no bridges in the island; the Haytians being all good swimmers, and much addicted to ablutions, deem them unnecessary. In the time of the French, the roads through the whole of their division were admirable; indeed they were admitted to be the best in the West Indies; the materials being adjacent to them, and the expense of putting them on the required parts so very trifling, they were always kept in the most perfect order, and carriages of all descriptions could pass with the same facility as in any country in Europe, from one extremity of the colony to the other. The accommodations for strangers too were of the first order, and no inconvenience was experienced for the want of those comforts so requisite after a journey under a tropical sun. But the scene is quite changed. It is almost impossible to describe the state of the roads at this moment. It is evident that, notwithstanding the heavy contributions levied for their repair, they have remained untouched since the revolution, and there seems a disposition on the part of the government to efface every vestige of the former roads, leaving the people who travel to beat out their own way in the most easy manner they can. On approaching the capital, they are, it is true, somewhat better than in the interior. Here a little attention is bestowed upon them, whilst in other districts they are unno-

ticed. All the criminals sentenced to labour on the roads are employed in the vicinity of Port au Prince; and this seems to be a measure suggested from its being economical, as the criminals have an opportunity of supporting themselves by begging.

It may not be amiss to explain in this part how the criminals are treated in the republic, and to shew what nice feelings the government has with regard to their treatment during the hours of labour, and the way in which they are provided for. All criminals who are sentenced to work on the public roads for a stated time, are not *chained* together, but *roped together by pairs*, the rope being first attached to the neck, then descending to the body, where it is fastened; the ends of the ropes are joined, so as to leave the space of about three yards between the criminals thus tied together. They labour from daylight until sunset, being allowed an interval of about an hour and a half for dinner at noon. The government pretends to provide for them; but to save the expense of provisions, two of these criminals, accompanied by two soldiers with their bayonets fixed, are permitted to go about to beg provisions for the subsistence of the whole, and unless they chance to be very successful, they get but a very poor allowance, and often are left to fast until the next day. They are in gangs of about fifteen or twenty, and over every gang nearly as many soldiers, and an officer, all armed, are placed to force them

to labour. At night they are incarcerated in the gaol, and their bed is composed simply of boards without any covering; they are allowed no supper. Admitting their criminality to be great, and their punishment just, still such a system has a degree of barbarity in it which can never prevail except among savage nations. What! convicted felons sentenced to hard labour, and directed to beg for their subsistence at the point of the bayonet! It seems incredible. The thing is too revolting to be admitted, many will say; but I declare it to be a fact, and call upon the people of Hayti to contradict it if they can. It is the labour of these criminals which alone renders the roads approaching the city somewhat passable.

From Jacmel to the capital, the road is in the worst state, and it is evident that it has not undergone any repair since the revolution. It is almost impassable in places, and never receives the least attention from one end of the year to the other. If the roads were in a condition to offer the least encouragement to travellers, I cannot imagine a more romantic nor a more enchanting ride. Ascending the lofty mountain of Tavite, the scenery is beautiful. To the southward is seen the Carribean sea, with Jacmel and its plain immediately below; on the other side may be viewed the island of Gonaives, the bay of Port au Prince, with the town of Leogane and its extensive plains. In every direction

also are to be seen small cordilleras intersecting, between which are valleys whose verdure is perennial, and having natural pastures of the most luxuriant growth, which are seldom visited by the husbandman, and remain untouched by beast.

From the capital to the extremity of the western peninsula and Aux Cases, the roads are very bad. To the latter place a chaise may penetrate by way of Leogane, Petit Goane, Morogane, and Aquin; few persons however who are accustomed to travel between the two places would venture to drive, but would rather ride, as the safest mode of travelling. Going to the north from Port au Prince, the old road remains, but in such a state as to be in places almost impassable. When the country was in cultivation, and these roads were in their finest order, a tour through the northern departments of the country must have afforded the traveller much gratification.

From Gonaives to Cape Haytien, the road is somewhat more easy for travellers, and in fact, throughout the whole of Christophe's country, they are infinitely better than in the south, for he attended to their repairs, and saw that they were kept in good condition. The Escalier, about half way between the two places, deserves the notice of strangers, and perhaps is the most extraordinary road in the western world, with the exception of some that are to be met with in Columbia and in Mexico. No name

could be more appropriate, for it certainly has the appearance of a staircase. This road ascends very high, and the precipices on its side are enough to intimidate the boldest rider who attempts to ascend or descend it.

Through the whole of the republic I believe there is not a decent inn for the accommodation of travellers; at all events, I never had the good fortune to find one, nor did I hear of one in any direction. There are huts on the road side, into which those who are travelling sometimes go to obtain lodging for the night; but even in these, a bed would not be easily found, and instead of a pallet, some boards thrown on the floor must suffice to repose on. On the summit of the mountains of Tavite, there is a hut of this description, and on passing that road on one occasion I was benighted, and took up my abode there until morning. A bed I was unable to obtain, there being only one in the house, and that was taken up by a Frenchman who had arrived a little before me. Mine hostess of the mountain, however, being a good-natured sable creature, was kind enough to prepare a place on which I might recline during my stay. Whilst she was engaged in adjusting my apartment, I thought it a measure of necessity to prepare myself for it by a copious libation of brandy, as a somniferous cordial; a great requisite in these Haytian inns, as one is sometimes rather disturbed by an insect that is very common in them, and of

which it is not an easy matter for a man to disencumber himself, as they evince an extraordinary pertinacity in adhering to the body, and excite a sensation not at all calculated to invite sleep. Having fortified myself against the offensive operations of my dreaded enemy, I prepared to enter my apartment, but this was attended with some difficulty, its dimensions being only sufficient for a dwarf, and not calculated for a person somewhat beyond the middle size. I was obliged therefore to resort to the plan usually adopted on board of small vessels, by putting my head in first, and then by degrees to get in my body and legs; and this place about four feet square, on boards covered with my cloak, being one of those apartments of the inn usually appropriated for strangers, became my lodging for the night. To sleep was impossible, for the bugs, rats, and croaking lizards, haunted me the whole night, and I rose again before daylight just as fatigued as when I arrived the evening before, and with the additional knowledge of having a dollar to pay for my *bed*. The houses of the negroes in the British colonies are a palace compared with this *inn for travellers*; and yet this is one of the most frequented places in the republic.

In most parts of the West Indies there are public places to which people frequently resort for amusement on holidays, but there is no such thing in Hayti, except when parties occasionally go from

Port au Prince to the lakes of the Cul de Sac, but even this is attended with great inconvenience, there being no places for the reception of travellers; and persons are therefore obliged to seek and beg temporary accommodations of the people in their vicinity, from whom at times you do not receive much civility, and they exact enormously for every thing you purchase. Were there any place fit for the reception of people, a tour to the lakes is worth undertaking, though the roads to them, like all the rest, are execrable. The largest of these lakes is named La Laguna de Henriquillo, and is about fifty miles in circumference, situate to the eastward of the old line of demarcation, and about thirty miles from the sea at the mouth of the Rio de Pedernales. Its water is salt, and although at this distance from the coast, there is the same motion in its waters as in the neighbouring ocean. The country on its banks is exceedingly attractive and highly picturesque, and exhibits a scene of natural fertility and beauty scarcely to be equalled in any other part of the Antilles. The game peculiar to the country is very abundant in this district, and the inhabitants who reside near the lakes subsist solely upon it and the fish which they can obtain in great abundance.

The smaller lake, called Etang du Cul de Sac, contains fresh water, and the fish in it are very numerous. The soil in the vicinity of these lakes is the deepest and richest mould, and not having

for years been disturbed for tillage, has become highly nutritive, from the animal and vegetable matter which decays annually upon its surface.

The value of land throughout the republic is greatly deteriorated, from the impossibility of making a money value from it within any moderate time. Labour being so high, and the difficulty of finding labourers for cultivation so very great, that the lands in the possession of the government lie in an untilled state, without any person evincing the slightest disposition to purchase them. Land also in the possession of individuals is similarly circumstanced; and those who are large proprietors cannot effect a sale of any produce which they may have beyond the quantity which they can consume; consequently a proprietor may have an immense extent of land, and yet be quite unable to derive any benefit from it by cultivation, or to convert it into money, for the want of purchasers. Thus, as I have before stated, there is no individual wealth in the country, because, although a man may have very large landed possessions, still those possessions are unavailable, for they produce him nothing, as he can seldom find persons disposed either to occupy or purchase them. There are some instances of proprietors leasing their lands to persons who undertake to cultivate them, for which they receive about one-third of the produce; but this is far from being general, and I imagine can only be accomplished by military

men who have the command of troops, and who are thereby enabled to till them by working parties daily sent out for that purpose.

The finest land in the republic would not sell for more than sixty dollars per acre, although contiguous to a port for shipping, and of a quality so strong and nutritive, as to be capable of growing any of the tropical productions. The mountain-lands, and the lighter descriptions in the plains, suitable for cocoa and cotton, can be obtained for a price varying between twenty and thirty dollars in any quantity from ten to five hundred acres. In the plains of the Artibanite, where the soil is exceedingly rich and fertilized by the overflowings of that river in the months of May and November, and which has been yearly improving its condition, from having been upwards of thirty years out of cultivation, I have known small plots of land, for horticultural purposes, sold for forty dollars per acre. In those districts where indigo and cotton were formerly most generally planted, for the growth of which the soil is suitable, the situation peculiarly adapted, and the climate and seasons congenial, the price of land seldom exceeds thirty dollars per acre. I know an instance of a sale of land, once an old cotton plantation, which only brought twenty dollars per acre for one part, and about twelve for another.

In the northern department, about Limonde and La Grande Rivière, land is exceedingly low, and

notwithstanding its high repute for all the purposes of cultivation, it seldom exceeds forty or forty-five dollars per acre, and even at those prices it is difficult to find purchasers, except for mere plots to be occupied in raising vegetables. The finest pasture-lands, having all the advantages of shade and water, and in all the luxuriance of vegetation, can scarcely find purchasers, and will not bring above forty dollars per acre. With respect to lands on the coast they are generally in waste, unless they happen to be immediately in the vicinity of a town, when some of them are occupied as small settlements for vegetables and for raising poultry for the markets : but there are no extensive plantations of sugar or coffee situate very near the sea, although formerly the whole coast was in cultivation as far as it was practicable to extend it.

In the plains of Cul de Sac, in the neighbourhood of La Croix des Bouquets, the land is a little occupied, but in possession of individuals who have held it since the distribution in the time of Toussaint and Dessalines; and although in this part of the country the soil is exceedingly deep and strong, land hardly finds purchasers. Land again in the mountains varies in price according to its situation. In those valleys surrounded by the cordilleras that are so numerous in the country, and in which the verdure is constant, which are finely watered, and have a delightful temperature through the year, the land

sometimes brings fifty dollars per acre, whilst tracts exposed to the north and north-easterly winds, and having rapid descents, are seldom worth purchasing, and few people buy them; they are generally given by the government to superannuated soldiers, who are allowed to leave the army and turn cultivators. Land in the towns and cities is sold at moderate prices, much lower than might be imagined. A lot, containing a frontage of sixty feet, with a depth of forty or fifty feet, eligibly situate for the purposes of trade, may be bought in Port au Prince for about two hundred dollars. This may seem surprising to persons unacquainted with the country, and who have been led to believe that Hayti is in a most flourishing state; but it is true, and at once shews that poverty is generally prevalent, and that there is no security for property in whatever commodity it may be vested. Houses and land are a very insecure tenure under such a government as that which at present exists in Hayti, and whilst such a constitution endures, and such inefficient persons are permitted to command, but little improvement can be expected, and the value of property, instead of increasing, will certainly decline.

CHAPTER XI.

Agriculture.—Crops in Toussaint's and Dessalines' time.—System of Christophe and Petion.—Decline under Boyer.—Crops in his time.—Attempts to revive it.—Coercion resorted to.—Code Rural—doubts on enforcing its clauses.—Disposal of lands.—Consequences from it.—Incompetency of planters.—State of cultivation of sugar, coffee, cocoa, cotton, indigo.—Free labour.—Consequences arising from it—its inefficacy, etc.

I SHALL now endeavour to detail the decline of agriculture in Hayti, and to offer a few remarks upon its present state; as well as to shew that under the present inefficient government, very faint hopes only can be held out of any revival, or that the republic of Hayti can ever reach that eminence and repute which once belonged to Saint Domingo as a French colony.

In various parts of this work I have observed that the decline of agriculture commenced immediately after the improvident and impolitic measures pursued by the national assembly of France, and after the first partial revolt of the slave population: and that all the energy of the successive chiefs who have subsequently governed the country, and who have promulgated several edicts to enforce or encourage

cultivation, has not been sufficiently powerful to keep up that regular system of tillage from which, in her former state, she derived such advantages. True it is, that great efforts were made by Toussaint, Dessalines, and Christophe, to infuse into the people a taste for husbandry, and to impress on them that the surest way to arrive at affluence is by an undeviating perseverance in the cultivation of those lands which had fallen into their possession; that the only true riches of a country are to be derived from the soil; and that commerce, although a very powerful auxiliary, is only a secondary means by which a nation can arrive at opulence, or its people attain to any advancement in wealth. But their efforts were unavailing in part, though they certainly did more to keep up cultivation than has been attempted since their days. The proclamation of Toussaint in the year 1800 was a powerful document, and had a great effect as an incitement to labour; and his solicitude respecting an intercourse with Europe and the United States shewed that he wished to adopt every expedient by which encouragement could be given to the cultivator; to find a vent for their productions, in order to enhance their value, and thus stimulate the occupiers of the soil to further exertions. He was extremely solicitous to introduce an organized system of cultivation which would eventually aggrandize his country. Coercion he knew to be absolutely necessary. He was well

aware that without this nothing could be accomplished. But the state of popular feeling rendered the rigid exaction of duty in agricultural labour a dangerous experiment; he therefore decided on adopting a mean between two extremes which, while it excited no dissatisfaction among the people, would provide for the exigences of his government.

Toussaint unquestionably pursued a plan which, had he not been seized by the French general, and in defiance of the laws of honour and nations so inhumanly transported to France, would in time have so far restored agriculture, and placed his country in so flourishing a condition, that in a few years it would have rivalled even the most happy period of its agricultural and commercial greatness. His object was clearly to advance by degrees, and to stimulate his people to the culture of the soil, by holding it up as the most noble pursuit of which they could possibly make choice; to infuse into them a taste for industry; and to give them a relish for those rural occupations which cultivation required, and for which, the extremely rich and fertile soil of the country would so amply and so quickly reward them. He had also made great strides towards impressing them with an idea that they had many wants, which, although artificial, yet were necessary towards advancing them in the opinion of the world. To teach them this effectually, and to impress it

seriously, would have been a work of time, but he made great efforts, and he began to perceive that they had not been unavailing. But wherever he discovered an invincible indisposition to receive these salutary lessons and a total disregard of his admonitions and persuasions, he tried what force would accomplish; and consequently the law for enforcing agriculture was enacted, and all people were directed to make choice of the plantations on which they were disposed to labour, prohibiting all persons from living in idleness and sloth. The estate and the employer being thus once selected, the labourer was not permitted to recall his choice, unless permission to do this were granted him by the officer commanding the district or one of the municipal authorities. Hence the labourers became once more slaves in fact, although not so in name.

When this law was promulgated, Toussaint began to exert the power which he possessed to enforce it, and cultivation began to raise its head in a most eminent degree. The sugar estates exhibited labour going on with the same spirit and success as in former times; the coffee settlements displayed a busy scene in every direction throughout the colony; and the cotton and cocoa plantations shewed that they were not to be neglected in the midst of this animated and interesting struggle for the revival of a country's greatness and a nation's wealth. But here coercion did the work, here was compulsory

labour resorted to, because it was sanctioned by the law, and those who held the power were more than equal to those who felt a disposition to resist it. The whip, that symbol of office of the principal negro, was dispensed with, it is true, but the cultivators were placed under the apprehension of a more effective weapon, for they were attended through the day by a military guard, and the bayonet and the sabre superseded the cat and the lash. To the astonishment of the leading people in the country, the cultivators submitted to this coercion without a murmur; and it was not until French intrigue was industriously set to work to instil into their minds that their condition was worse than when they were slaves, that any disposition was shewn to oppose the principle of compulsory labour; and even this opposition was far from being general. When we take into consideration that the population under Toussaint had greatly diminished, and that the cultivators in his time exceeded very little more than half of the slaves that were employed in agriculture in the time of the French, and compare the returns of produce at the respective periods, it must be evident that the system of coercion resorted to by Toussaint, must have been to the full as rigid as that which existed at any former period, or it would have been impossible for him to have carried on cultivation to so great an extent.

In the early part of this work I have stated the

quantity of produce exported in the year 1791, which was the most flourishing period of the French, and the number of slaves that were employed in the colony. That the reader may more clearly see the difference at the two periods, I shall enumerate the principal articles again. It appears by various authorities that the exports were as follow: in 1791—

Sugar	163,405,220 pounds.
Coffee	68,151,180 ditto.
Cotton	6,286,126 ditto.
Indigo	930,016 ditto.
Molasses	29,502 hogsheads.
Rum	303 puncheons.

And that there were employed for all the purposes of cultivation, four hundred and fifty-five thousand slaves. The most productive year under his sway, will be found to exhibit the following returns of exports:—

Sugar	53,400,000 pounds.
Coffee	34,370,000 ditto.
Cotton	4,050,000 ditto.
Cocoa	234,600 ditto.
Indigo	37,600 ditto.
Molasses	9,128 hogsheads.

According to Mr. Humboldt, the cultivators employed to carry on the whole of the works of agriculture, and to produce the above exports, did not exceed two hundred and ninety thousand. In addi-

tion to the foregoing returns should be taken into consideration the condition into which the soil had been brought by the exertions and the judicious measures pursued by this chief from the year 1798, when he became the leader of the people, to the time of his seizure. All those estates on which culture had so successfully recommenced, were so much improved by his system, that the greatest expectations were entertained respecting the produce of future exertions; but the fall of this chief, and the renewal of the contest between the people and the French, threw every thing again into confusion, and the work of cultivation for a time ceased, with the exception of the exertions made by the women, who applied themselves to labour, and their efforts were not altogether unavailing, for they proceeded with the lighter labour of the plantations, which was exceedingly beneficial.

When Dessalines assumed the command, the country was in a state of great irritability, and he could not therefore devote that attention to agriculture which his predecessor had done. But when he had succeeded in expelling the French from the island, and had restored some degree of tranquillity, and the people became somewhat free from apprehension of future broils, he began to devise means for reviving cultivation; but he wanted the discretion and the temper, as well as that knowledge of the people which Toussaint possessed. The latter

pursued a system of culture, that in the first instance was easy and acceptable to them, and when he saw that they began to relax in their duty, he began to enforce it more rigidly, and under the sanction of the law inflicted punishment with no light hand, in cases of disobedience and refractory conduct. But Dessalines acted differently and most injudiciously, for he rushed upon the cultivators so suddenly, and with so tyrannical a hand, that disobedience began to be general; and those people who had in his predecessor's time been the most industrious and most forward in setting an example to their fellow-labourers became supine and inactive through his oppressive proceedings. Dessalines knew well that force alone could compel his countrymen to work, and that nothing could be obtained from them if they were left to their own will; but he was too precipitate and hasty in introducing his measures of coercion. He even compelled his soldiers to labour in the field in parties, on such of the government estates as had not been farmed out, and for which they received a trifling addition to their regular military pay. But all his exertions were ineffectual in producing such returns as those which followed the efforts of Toussaint. Both knew that coercion was the only way by which cultivation could be carried on, and they both resorted to it. With one it succeeded in a degree which equalled his most sanguine expectations, because he advanced pro-

gressively, and the people did not feel it so severely; whilst the other burst upon the cultivators with an unmerciful hand and inflicted such punishments for disobedience as made them determine on resistance, and the consequence was, that a revolt followed, and Dessalines fell. By a document given me by an individual now living in Hayti, and who was attached to the suite of the tyrant, it appears that with all his power and exertions, his returns from the soil fell much below those of his predecessor. In 1804, which seems to have yielded about the largest return of his three years, the exports were the following:—

Sugar	47,600,000 pounds.
Coffee	31,000,000 ditto.
Cotton	3,000,000 ditto.
Cocoa	201,800 ditto.
Indigo	55,400 ditto.
Molasses	10,655 hogsheads.

The number of the cultivators at this period has not been stated, though I have been informed by respectable individuals that they were as numerous as in the time of Toussaint, but that from the very harsh proceedings of Dessalines a great number left their homes and fled to the eastern part of the island, and there lived in the woods and recesses of the mountains until they heard of his death.

In the time of Christophe and Petion the culture of the soil was carried on by the former with some

spirit, whilst the latter allowed it to relax in a most extraordinary degree. Christophe pursued it with strong compulsory measures, as may be seen by his adoption of the code of Toussaint, but Petion left every thing to the will and inclination of his people. The government of the north, by means of its agricultural pre-eminence, had a flowing treasury, and its people advanced in affluence from the effects of industry; but the government of the south, from supineness and from a disregard of cultivation, was reduced to the lowest state of poverty, and was driven to expedients exceedingly ruinous in their consequences. By Christophe the people were taught to love agricultural pursuits, as conducive to their happiness and comforts; and were made to understand that cultivation would be enforced, and that the disobedient and the indolent would be visited with the full penalty of the law. By Petion every class of persons were permitted to pursue those courses to which their tastes and their will led them. Uncontrolled by any regulations of the state, they never pursued cultivation beyond their own immediate wants; and beyond the supply of those wants, which were inconsiderable, no surplus was left for the use of government or for the purposes of commerce. Whilst the north excited some degree of interest in the mind of the traveller as he pursued his journey through its several districts, by an appearance of industry and cultivation, the south dis-

played little more than occasional spots of vegetation, and the eye wandered over an expanse of country in a state of waste and neglect. The mistaken policy of Petion ruined the progress of agriculture in his part, and all his after efforts to restore its wonted vigour were ineffectual and unavailing. Fondly confiding that his people would without compulsion devote the whole of their time to the pursuits of industry, he permitted them to indulge in those propensities to which they were naturally prone. But instead of keeping pace with their northern neighbours in the progress of agricultural industry, they evidently receded beyond the possibility of recovery, and not a chance was left that agriculture would revive under the weak and ineffectual measures of Petion's government.

Christophe most advantageously farmed out the government estates, and at the same time he gave to the farmers of them every possible support; but he most strictly bound them to push the culture of their lands as far as it was practicable from the paucity of labourers; and he also ordained the portion of labour which might be exacted from each of them. Every individual in the least acquainted with the portion of labour allotted for the slave in the British colonies will readily admit, that the labour performed by them, far from being excessive, does not exceed the ordinary labour of man in general throughout the agricultural countries in Eu-

rope or the United States of America. From every account which I have been able to collect, and from the testimony of living persons, Christophe exacted from every labourer the full performance of a day's labour as provided for by the twenty-second article of the law for regulating the culture of soil, and which forms a part of the Code Henry, and every proprietor who did not enforce it incurred his severest censure. The only thing which impeded the great advancement of cultivation in his dominions was his contest with Petion, and the necessity which that occasioned for his keeping up a powerful military establishment, which took away the most able of the cultivators for the army.

After the union of the three divisions of the island under the republic, some hopes were entertained that Boyer would concert measures for reviving agriculture, although from his election to the presidential chair after the death of Petion, he had given no proofs, nor evinced the least desire to disturb the cultivators, but allowed them to follow such courses as seemed most congenial to their habits, and consequently, instead of any improvement in the condition of the country, there was evidently a greater decline; and as the population had been greatly increased, the whole country tranquil, and without the appearance of any interruption being given to it, a period more favourable could not have arrived for effecting a change of a system, which he must have

seen was attended with the most baneful consequences.

I shall now advert to the quantity of produce obtained from the soil after the union, and it seems, from the returns which were laid before the public in 1823, and subsequently from a note which I had presented to me in Hayti, that the year 1822, the first year after the union, was the most productive, and that since that period there has been an evident decline. In 1822, the exports stood thus:—

Coffee	35,117,834 pounds.
Sugar	652,541 ditto.
Cotton	891,950 ditto.
Cocoa	322,145 ditto.
Logwood	3,816,583 ditto.
Mahogany	20,100 feet.

The whole value of which, in Hayti, seems to have been estimated at about nine millions, thirty thousand, three hundred and ninety-seven dollars, and the export duties one million, three hundred and sixty-five thousand, four hundred and two dollars; together, ten millions, three hundred and ninety-five thousand, seven hundred and ninety-nine dollars, or about two millions, seventy-nine thousand, one hundred and fifty-nine pounds sterling, taking the value of the dollar as in Hayti at four shillings sterling. No subsequent year has been equal in produce to 1822, and in 1825 the returns are infinitely less, for the quantity of coffee does not exceed thirty million

pounds, sugar seven hundred and fifty thousand pounds, and the other articles somewhat less in proportion. The valuation of the whole in 1825 is stated at eight millions of dollars, or thereabouts. Such is the wretched state to which the improvident measures of Boyer has brought agriculture in Hayti, and in this condition would the republic have remained, had he not attended to the suggestions of men wiser than himself, who have some knowledge of governing, and who are not such bigots as to be led by a mistaken philanthropy, when they perceive their country sinking under its injurious effects.

An individual now high in the councils of Boyer made the strongest remonstrances against the unwise policy which he followed; and the late Baron Dupuy, a man who knew how the best interests of his country might be upheld, declared to him that by pursuing such a line in future he would bring the republic to the brink of ruin. That it was folly to think of any expedients for raising their national wealth and consequence, except by encouraging and enforcing the cultivation of the soil, and extending their commercial intercourse by every possible means, for that agriculture and commerce were the only sources of national wealth.

When we look into the state of the products in the time of Toussaint, and compare them with those of Boyer, it is a just conclusion to draw, that the one knew his people, and the other feared them; that

the former by compulsory means enriched his country, and kept the people quiet, whilst the latter, by giving unlimited latitude to indolence, has impoverished and ruined them. This is the more extraordinary, also, when we look at the means of each chief for cultivating the soil, and the strength of the population at the respective periods. Toussaint's population, according to Humboldt, only amounted to three hundred and seventy-five thousand, and by the census taken in 1824, when the island was incorporated under Boyer's government, it amounted to nine hundred and thirty-five thousand, three hundred and thirty-five, so that in 1822 it could not have been many short of that number. And supposing therefore the census of Boyer to be correct, was such an astonishing decrease ever known in the means of any country in the world, and arising too from the incapacity of its ruler and the weakness of its government?

When poverty began to be felt, and the exigences of the state became alarmingly pressing, Boyer became convinced that his policy had been defective and ruinous, and that it was time to concert plans for rousing himself from the lethargy into which he had fallen. He was forced to seek advice from the very people whose counsels he had before rejected with disdain. He courted them, and even begged, that they would suggest the most beneficial plans for relieving the country from that

dilemma into which his precipitancy and obstinacy had thrown it. They again stepped forward, and their first suggestion was a *rigid system of agriculture*, the revival of Toussaint's principle of culture, and the strict enforcement of it without any evasion or escape. It was by coercion that Toussaint, Des-salines, and even Christophe, raised their country, and by coercion only could Hayti recover its pristine condition. Her prosperity had received a stab, and it required skill and experience to restore her wonted vigour.

It is evident that the sugar plantations were nearly all thrown up, as the country scarcely produced more than was necessary for its own consumption. There were a few only that had the appearance of being cultivated, and those were in the possession of individuals connected with the government either in a civil or military capacity. On these plantations the work was generally performed by labouring parties from the military stations in their vicinity; and if labourers from the general class of cultivators were engaged, they never omitted to exact from them a due proportion of work, and they were always superintended by the gens d'armes, or country police, armed for the sole purpose of compelling them to the performance of their duty.

A variety of expedients were tried, it is true, by the leading proprietors in the country, but more particularly by the military ones, for the purpose of

advancing cultivation by the most effectual means. The cane, requiring a greater proportion of labour than any other of the staple articles of growth, was little attended to ; it seemed therefore advisable to hold out inducements to prevail upon the people to undertake its culture. In many instances, I have been informed, the proprietors have not only offered them a fourth of the produce, but they have actually promised a pecuniary remuneration in addition to it. Even this would not induce them to work, and nothing therefore remained but to adopt a system of compulsory labour. That compulsion was resorted to, is a fact ; but the law was not sufficiently strong to punish offenders in the case of disobedience, and many delinquents, many of the refractory labourers, who had engaged to perform a certain portion of duty on a plantation, but neglected to do so, escaped that punishment which they deserved.

The law for the better observance of the culture of the soil, until the Code Rural, of which I shall speak hereafter, made its appearance, was extremely deficient, and merely compelled all cultivators to remain on their respective settlements, and to attend to the duties required on them, except on Saturday and Sunday, and such holidays as were particularly enumerated ; but there was no penalty for disobedience sufficient to deter a man from being guilty of it. As far however as the proprietors dared to go

in enforcing labour, many of them certainly proceeded, and in several instances I have seen the labourers working under the terror of the bayonet and sabre, and this too on the plantations of Boyer himself. I have seen it also on those of Secretary-General Inginac, Colonel Lerebour, General Jeddion, and General Mazuy, and several others.

It was evident to every man in Hayti, at all conversant with the negro character, that an attempt to keep up cultivation without force was impossible, and many of the proprietors, themselves negroes, knew that by force only could they obtain labourers amongst their people. They knew that indolence in the negro was innate, and that it was absolutely impracticable to carry on the work in the soil unless rigid laws were enacted to enforce it. The laws which had been passed by Toussaint and Dessalines had become so mutilated by relaxation and modification, that they were little more than a dead letter; and the government, recovering from its apathy, and feeling the consequences of its loss of energy and want of decision, very wisely remonstrated with the president, and condemned further submission to the will of a people desirous to go on unrestrained in their indolent propensities. This remonstrance was effectual, and Boyer acquiesced in the necessity of establishing a system of extensive cultivation, and of enacting a law to provide for its due observance throughout his dominions. He saw the good effects

which had arisen from the application of force on his own plantation at Tor, on which the cultivators worked under the surveillance of a military guard; and he therefore became now as willing an advocate for a law to sanction coercive labour, as he had been negligent in not providing for the culture of the soil from the beginning of his power.

The Code Rural, the existence of which has been the subject of much doubt, was passed by the Chamber of Communes on the 21st of April, 1826, admitted by the senate on the 1st of May, and received the president's fiat on the 6th of the same month. All this took place during my residence in Port au Prince. This law is the work of Secretary-General Inginac, aided by one or two of the members from the chamber and the senate. During the discussion of this law in the Chamber of Communes, it was remarked by one of the most intelligent of its members, "that it was a measure of expediency, for that the citizen cultivators had become so indolent that agriculture had in some districts been almost forgotten, and that cultivation was completely suspended." This declaration was echoed through the chamber, and every member concurred in the observation, and gave it his unqualified assent.

On the 1st of May, the day appointed for the celebration of the Fête Agriculture, and when the cultivators were assembled in the public square bearing specimens of their several productions of the soil,

the president, together with a member from the chamber and another from the senate, addressed them, and said that the legislature would provide for a more general cultivation, and that all persons not engaged, or usually occupied as labourers, would be peremptorily called upon for a more strict attention to their duty, as the government contemplated a revival of agriculture, which had fallen into so much neglect from the indolent habits of the people. These addresses *were not* received with acclamation, and many a cultivator heard them with a degree of dissatisfaction which seemed to forebode resistance.

The Chamber of Communes, in its farewell address, tells the people that laws “just and severe” were imperative for the revival of agriculture, and that by the law which they had passed to enforce cultivation they thought that they had materially served their country, and in such an opinion I most readily concur. They rendered to their country an important service by passing the Code Rural; for it will tend towards obstructing the course of immorality pursued by the people in their idleness, and will eventually reestablish upon a sound basis the shattered finances of the state. The passage in that address is so very forcible, and so extremely just, that I shall call the attention of my readers to it, as it has been given by a gentleman to whom I am under many obligations for his assistance upon va-

rious subjects connected with this work. It says, "What is due to the conservative principle would not have been provided, if the revival of our agriculture had not been stimulated (*provoqué*) by laws at once just and severe; your representatives in passing the Code Rural, have believed that a benefit was conferred upon the people." This was conclusive of the opinion of the country that severity was imperative for enforcing a general cultivation, and that, without laws "just and severe", force cannot be resorted to with any chance of a favourable result.

It may not be unimportant to give a few of the articles of the Code Rural. This Code has now found its way to Europe, and the public, on reading its enactments, will be enabled to judge of the feelings of the leading persons in Hayti with regard to the state of cultivation, when such laws are said to be required to force the people to labour.

"Art. 173. The purposes of Rural Police are,

"First. The repressing idleness.

"Second. Enforcing order and assiduity in agricultural labour.

"Third. The discipline of the labourers collectively or in gangs.

"Fourth. The making and keeping in repair of the roads, both public and private.

"Art. 174. All persons who are not proprietors or renters of the land on which they are residing, or

who shall not have made a contract to work with some proprietor or renter, shall be reputed vagabonds, and shall be arrested by the rural police of the section in which they may be found, and carried before the justice of the peace of the commune.

“ Art. 175. The justice of the peace, after interrogating and hearing the person brought before him, shall make known to him the articles of the law which oblige him to employ himself in agricultural labour; and after that communication he shall remand him to prison, until he shall have bound himself by a contract according to the provisions of the law.

“ Art. 176. The justice of the peace will allow the person arrested to make his own choice of the individual with whom he is to contract to labour.

“ Art. 177. If, after eight days of detention, the prisoner shall not have agreed to go to field work, he shall be sent to the public works for cleaning the town or district where he may be arrested, and there he shall be employed until he shall consent to go to field labour. The person who removes any labourer from the public works to employ him in private work shall be subject to a fine of fifty dollars, of which a moiety is to be paid to the person complaining.

“ Art. 178. If the prisoner be a child under age, the justice of the peace shall inquire out his parents, and send him to them to follow their condition of life.

“ Art. 179. After the expiration of three months from the publication of this Code, rigorous measures shall be enforced against delinquents.

“ Art. 180. Every person attached to the country as a cultivator, who shall on a working day, and during the hours of labour, be found unemployed, or lounging on the public roads, shall be considered idle, and be arrested and taken before the justice of the peace, who shall commit him to prison for twenty-four hours for the first offence, and shall send him to labour on the public works upon a repetition of the offence.

“ Art. 181. To provide against vagabondage, under the pretence of being a soldier.

“ Art. 182. Officers commanding the rural police shall take care that in their respective sections no person shall live in idleness. For this purpose they have authority to oblige such persons as are not actually employed in labour, to give an account of their occupations; and such persons as cannot prove that they cultivate the soil, or are keepers of cattle-pens, shall be considered as without visible means of procuring their livelihood, and shall be arrested as vagabonds.

“ Art. 183. Field labour shall commence on Monday morning, and shall never cease until Friday evening (legal holidays excepted); and in extraordinary cases, when the interest of the cultiva-

tor as well as of the proprietor appears to require it, work shall be continued until Saturday evening.

“ Art. 184. On working days, the ordinary field labour shall commence at day-dawn, to continue until mid-day, with the interval of half an hour for breakfast, which shall be taken on the spot where the work is carrying on. After mid-day the field labour shall commence at two o’clock, and continue until sun-set.

“ Art. 185. Pregnant females shall be employed on light work only, and after the fourth month of pregnancy they shall not be obliged to do any work in the field.

“ Art. 186. Four months after delivery they shall be obliged to resume the labour in the field; but they shall not turn out to work until one hour after sun-rise; they shall continue to work until eleven o’clock, and from two o’clock until one hour before sun-set.

“ Art. 187. No labourer attached to an estate in the country shall absent himself from the labour assigned him, without the permission of the overseer, in the absence of the proprietor or farmer; and no one shall give that permission unless the case be urgent.

“ Art. 188. Gangs of labourers upon estates shall be obedient to their drivers, jobbers, sub-farmers, farmers, proprietors and managers, or overseers,

whenever they are called upon to execute the labour they have bound themselves to perform.

“ Art. 189. Every act of disobedience or insult on the part of a workman commanded to do any work, to which he is subjected, shall be punished by imprisonment, according to the exigency of the case, in the discretion of the justice of the peace of the commune.

“ Art. 190. Saturdays, Sundays, and holidays being at the entire disposal of the labourers, they shall not be permitted on working days to leave their work, to indulge in dancing or feasting, neither by night nor by day. Delinquents shall be subject to imprisonment for three days for the first offence, for six days for the repetition of the offence.”

The remaining articles of the code relate to the making of roads and keeping them in repair.

“ These clauses are given as more particularly exhibiting the effect of the code on the field labourer. To exhibit the whole system by which the driver is made answerable for the labourer, the overseer for his drivers and labourers, and the police, in its various grades, for the whole, it would be necessary to translate the entire code. During imprisonment, the labourer being absent from field work forfeits his wages; the pregnant women also appear to receive no wages during their exemption.”*

* Extract from “ The Courier.”

It is impossible for any one who is at all conversant with the negro character not to say, that the Code Rural is just such a law as the exigences of Hayti particularly require: and that it is absolutely and imperatively called for in order to extend cultivation, and to bring the people to some sense of duty towards their country and themselves. Left any longer to pursue their uncontrolled and unlimited propensity for indolence, they must recede into barbarism and uncivilization, and the country fall a sacrifice to the mistaken policy of its chief and the leaders of his government, and to those false ideas of philanthropy with which they are so often assailed by persons who are incompetent to advise, because they are without any knowledge of the country or its people.

The Code Rural, therefore, now enforces labour with a rigid hand,—nothing more excessive can be demanded of the slave in the British colonies; and I aver, that if the whole of the clauses of this code be complied with, it will exceed the labour performed by persons in actual slavery. I have my doubts, however, respecting the feasibility of carrying its clauses into successful operation, and whether the temper of the people at the present moment will be submissive enough to adhere to it in all its parts, I am inclined to think that they have been too long indulged in those vices which seem inherent in the negro, to be brought to obedience; and that too

rigid an enforcement will bring on discontent, and finally a general resistance. I think it therefore exceedingly probable that Boyer with all his vaunting, with all his proclamations, and aided by his military force, will never proceed to those extremities to promote agriculture, to which he can now go under the sanction of laws made expressly for that purpose. The Code Rural must unquestionably astonish those advocates for free labour who have held up Hayti as an example of what can be accomplished by it; and I think they cannot now have the temerity to say that cultivation in the tropics can be effectually carried on without coercion, when even the Haytian government is constrained to have recourse to it. For my part, I have seen nothing in Hayti to induce me to alter the opinion which I have always entertained of the negro, nor for a moment to expect that cultivation can be carried on with any probability of success without coercion. But I declare it to be my firm conviction, that unless coercion be resorted to, the negro will not labour. The impulse for indulging in sloth and in indolence is too irresistible, and it will not be in the power of the government to make any progress in agricultural labour, except it be done by actual force.

The system pursued by the Haytian government respecting the disposal of its lands seems to be erroneous. Allotting it out in small grants of ten

to fifteen acres, is an injudicious measure: it only tends towards extending and perpetuating the evil and pernicious habits of the people. When a negro obtains a grant of a small tract of land, he cares little about the cultivation of it beyond the production of enough for his own immediate wants, and those wants are trifling. Two or three hours' labour in each week will suffice to answer all the purposes of the culture required to produce food enough for himself; the rest of his time is then allowed to dwindle away in the most puerile pleasures and inconsistencies. No object which moderate industry could procure would balance the insatiable desire for reposing under the shade of the guava, and for ablutions in the neighbouring stream; with these and a little food all his wants are supplied. Such being the case, and known to be so by the government, it is enough to surprise one that they should parcel out their lands in this way, because, even under the Code Rural, the person holding it is no longer a labourer, but a proprietor, and is not therefore amenable to it. Had the government proceeded differently, and let the estates to farm as they were originally laid out, so many petty proprietors would not have existed, but would have remained amenable to the law for enforcing cultivation. From this unwise system, labourers are scarce in Hayti, and the few that are to be obtained are of the worst characters, negroes so

abandoned as not to have been considered worthy of inheriting a patch of land. Hayti abounds with these small proprietors; their patches of land, with their huts upon them, are generally situate in the mountains, in the recesses, or on the most elevated parts, on spots, as the poet has described, "the most inaccessible by shepherds trod." They are therefore lost for the purposes of agriculture: their cultivation does not extend beyond vegetables for the markets in their vicinity, added to which they furnish an occasional supply of pork, poultry, and wild pigeons.

Another important question arises on this subject, and that is the quantum of labour which a negro is capable of performing within the day. In the British colonies an experienced planter can at once discern how much labour a slave is capable of performing. He can also discriminate between slaves who are willing and industrious, and those who are careless and indolent; and apportions their labour according to their respective deserts and capacities. The Haytian proprietor is deficient in these requisites; he is not a planter practically, and he is ignorant of its theory. There is nothing regular in his system; it is an anomaly, a strange, incongruous method of proceeding, having no tendency either to improve the soil or benefit himself. The sugar planter in the first place is so ignorant that he knows not the virtue which his soil possesses, nor what it is capable of producing. He consi-

ders not whether one field is better adapted for the production of canes than another, but plants indiscriminately in bad or good soil, in heavy or light; in fact he knows not whether it ought to be planted with canes or cotton, or if it would be wise to allow it to become common pastures. He is contented, and seems to be quite satisfied, if he can but obtain vegetation in any way; careless about the manner in which it is accomplished. To ascertain whether it can be improved by art or industry, is a matter about which he is unconcerned.

But the cane is not often planted. Most of the cane pieces on plantations are old, probably they were planted by the French, or subsequently in the time of Toussaint. They exhibit an appearance of age, for their circumference is small, and their joints are not more than three inches apart, nor do they ever exceed four feet in length. These are very seldom manured or trashed, nor do they receive any attention from the time of cutting until they are again ready for the mill the following year. There is no such thing as stirring the soil between the rows at particular times, nor do the cultivators ever trouble themselves about divesting the cane of its superfluous and decaying leaves, so as to open a free course for the air through the whole. Nothing of this is done in Hayti. The fertility of the soil, the congeniality of climate, and the regularity of seasons, suffice for manure, and the rest is left to nature. Art and the

industry of man contribute little or nothing to the growth of the cane. The hoe and other implements of tillage are rendered useless by indolence, the planter's unconquerable love of ease having brought them into disrepute; and I shall be somewhat astonished if the Code Rural will have power enough to revive their use.

The same irregularity attends the operations at the mill, the boiling-house, the distillery, and the other departments of the plantation. I have been through them often, and have been surprised at the want of order which every where prevails. There is nothing systematically arranged,—every thing seems in confusion; the works are detached, and resemble more a heap of ruins than conveniences for manufacturing and distilling. The interior of the boiling-house would astonish a Jamaica planter: the several boilers are not ranged in succession from the receiver to the teache, as they are in the British colonies. They are placed without rule, and in their manner of conveying the liquor from one copper to another the waste is considerable; and this is observable too in all their operations. There is nothing like cleanliness in their works; filth and every species of dirtiness are to be seen in them; and this is prevalent, although they must be sensible that it is injurious, and often destructive to the quality of the sugar. The distillery department is also very injudiciously con-

structed. They take no pains to keep the heat at the proper degree requisite for fermentation: every thing has the appearance of negligence, and conveys to the observer a very bad specimen of Haytian skill in the art of manufacturing sugar or of distilling spirits. They do not often make rum: I only know of one or two plantations on which rum is distilled, and these are conducted by Englishmen; one in particular at Aux Cases, a Mr. Towning, who has an extensive distillery. He produces rum, which, in point of flavour, strength, and every other quality, I do not think inferior to that of Jamaica. To all persons who visit Aux Cases this gentleman is well known for the hearty and hospitable reception he always gives to a stranger. He is the only person in Hayti who devotes his attention to the distillation of rum. The Haytians cannot distil it; they are ignorant of its principle, and consequently confine themselves to the distillation of what is known in the British colonies under the denomination of low wines. The flavour of this spirit is most unpleasant; which arises, I conjecture, from the ingredients thrown into the fermenting vessels, and from which it is distilled: these, consisting of the molasses from the boiling-house, with all the sweepings of the works, with a proportion of water from any pool however stagnant, if pure water be not near, I apprehend give to the spirit a very acrid quality, as well as a fetid smell. It is however

held in great estimation by the people, who drink it freely, and they can obtain it cheap. Upon the whole there can be no difficulty in declaring that the Haytians are ignorant both of the cultivation of the cane, and of the process of manufacturing sugar.

It is evident that sugar is not much cultivated, as in every district throughout the republic there are only a few plantations to be seen in the plains of Cul de Sac and vicinity of Port au Prince where sugar is produced. There were in the time of the French about one hundred and forty sugar estates, very few, if any, with less than one thousand acres of land, one-fourth of which would be in canes, and the remainder in pastures and other crops. Now in the same space there are not more than twenty estates, and in each of them there cannot be found more than from forty to fifty acres of canes, the remainder of the land being in a neglected state, overrun with different weeds. President Boyer has an estate within a small distance of Port au Prince, called Tor, the favourite residence of the late Petion. This plantation has upwards of two thousand acres of land attached to it, and, from the great strength of the soil, it is impossible to select a spot more eligible for the production of sugar. But there are not more than forty acres of the land in canes. This, however, is not singular; it is general throughout the island. When the sugar cane in Hayti was

cultivated properly, and received the requisite care and attention in the several stages of its growth, it produced very abundantly. Bryan Edwards gives an average of two thousand seven hundred and twelve pounds of sugar per acre through the island; and at this period I have been informed, and in fact I have seen it calculated myself, that in the plains of Cul de Sac and Leogane the average does not exceed one thousand pounds of sugar per acre; and an experienced planter on looking at the canes when they are ripe for cutting, would conclude that they would not produce so much. Formerly a pound of sugar was obtained from a gallon of juice in some districts, in others sixteen pounds from twenty gallons, and in some sixteen pounds from twenty-four gallons: but now it requires nearly treble the quantity of juice to produce the same quantity of sugar: and this must remain so, until a new system of cultivation be tried, and the management of the plantations be entrusted to men of experience, men who have been practical planters, and who are conversant with the whole of its duties; men, I say, who have a perfect knowledge of the soil, its capabilities and its wants for the work of tillage, and who will devote their time and attention to all the minutiae of plantation labour. If such a system should ever be pursued in Hayti, and there be labourers to cultivate, and capital can be invested securely, then sugar planting may be

carried on with some chance of a successful issue: until this take place, I have great doubts whether the culture of the cane will prove profitable to the occupier of the soil.

The labour required for the cultivation of coffee is exceedingly light: I was therefore much surprised to see the very little progress the people had made in this branch of agriculture. When an individual, who has been accustomed to plantations in the British, French, and Spanish islands, visits the coffee plantations in Hayti, and observes the whole conducted without judgment or care, it impresses him with a most unfavourable idea of the people; and when he sees the easiest branch of agriculture so much neglected, it convinces him that their idleness is almost invincible. In the British islands every coffee plantation is arranged with the greatest exactitude. The lands are divided into fields as nearly equal as possible, and in those fields, in all probability, the coffee has been planted in successive seasons, so that when the period arrives in which the trees begin to exhibit a decline in their growth, the planter provides for the loss of them by planting others, and by this expedient manages always to keep up his crop. The fences which divide the fields are constantly kept up with regularity and order, the whole having the appearance of a garden laid out with neatness and precision. The plantation works for washing, dry-

ing, and preparing the coffee, are in the best condition, and with the barbagues, exhibit a well-arranged system for the production of the berry. In Hayti the scene is different: what is denominated there a coffee plantation, is neither more nor less than a large tract of land, throughout which grows spontaneously the coffee tree; not planted there by the people, but sprung from the seed which has fallen from those planted by the French, and which escaped destruction during the revolution. There is no such thing as a plantation established upon the same principle as in other islands. There are no divisions, no laying out of the lands, no order of planting in succession, nothing done towards improving and fertilizing the soil, in order to aid the growth of the tree, no lopping it of its excrescences, and pruning it to strengthen the parent stem; but every thing is left to nature, the pruning knife is sheathed, and the rank luxuriance of the tree is permitted to increase, whilst the hoe is seldom called into use, to extirpate those weeds which are so destructive to vegetation.

A person must be somewhat conversant with travelling in Hayti before he can discover on his road that a coffee plantation is near him. For my part, I could see nothing that resembled one, nor should I have known the coffee tree, growing as it did in a pyramidal form, surrounded by numberless other shrubs, had it not been for the appearance of

a few red berries on one of its lower branches. I alighted from my mule to examine some trees just round the spot : as nearly as I could ascertain, every tree must have exceeded twelve feet in height, and I am convinced that each of them at the time would not have produced two pounds of coffee in the husk. I had the curiosity to go a little way into the interior of this settlement to see if there were any thing like cultivation, but I could discover nothing bearing the least resemblance to a plantation. I saw nothing but a hut, and four or five people in it, whom I found to be the proprietors of the place. They were inquisitive, and not much pleased that I should have intruded on their privacy, and therefore I had a hint from my guide that it would be prudent not to advance farther. I saw, however, enough to convince me that there was no regular system of cultivation pursued in this place, although there were twelve hundred acres of land in the Keen ; and that the coffee grew in a wild state, the soil never being touched or disturbed, save, occasionally, by pigs, goats and asses, which range through the whole, and feed on the grass which grows luxuriantly in the intervals. Mills are not very common, and the few which exist are very small and turned by asses. Washing and pulping are not performed by machinery. Indeed I am inclined to suspect that they are dispensed with altogether, as I could not find any apparatus for these operations.

My guide knew this plantation well, and he told me, that although the proprietor had this large tract of land, yet he was so poor that he could not afford to hire cultivators, who, when employed, never did work enough to pay for their hire. I was anxious to ascertain the annual quantity of coffee which this place produced, and I was told that it did not exceed four thousand five hundred pounds weight. I have mentioned this plantation because it is considered to be a settlement in a productive part of the country, the mountains of Leogane; and extraordinary as it may appear, it is a very good illustration of the coffee settlements in general, all of which exhibit negligence and want of that industry which characterize the Haytian planter and cultivator.

Cotton, which formerly was an article much grown in Hayti, is now greatly neglected, although the labour attending it is very inconsiderable, the people having no wish to extend cultivation to those products of the soil which require planting annually. It is both an annual and a perennial plant, but the former is esteemed as most productive, whilst the latter is somewhat out of repute from not affording such profitable returns. In some of the districts, when in possession of the French, from the extreme luxuriance of the soil, a planter could obtain, from the labour of one man, six thousand pounds of it annually; but in these more modern times, and under the free labour system, not more than

six hundred pounds can be obtained, and even that is only partial, and not a general thing. In the vicinity of Gonaives it is more cultivated than in any other district, the soil in the uplands being more congenial for its growth than it is in any other part of the island. In the time of the French it produced about three millions and a half of pounds weight, but in 1825 the crop only amounted to five hundred and twenty thousand pounds. With lands so exceedingly fertile, so peculiarly adapted for the cultivation of this plant, it is not a very cheering prospect to see that free labour is able to accomplish so little in the production of an article of culture that requires such trifling exertion. What might not be accomplished by an industrious race of people in the production of cotton, in a country so favourable to its growth? If it were possible to waft the industry of the peasantry of Great Britain to the shores of Hayti, what an extraordinary effect would it have in the production of an article, the superior quality of which would so amply repay the tillers for their industry and care. But the Haytians care not for these things; they are totally unconcerned about the growth of any article for foreign consumption; they seem to have no desire beyond that of cultivating the few vegetables required for their own immediate use, leaving all other things to the effects of nature, even valuable articles of spontaneous growth being some-

times permitted to rise and fall into decay without becoming the object of the cultivator's attention.

The culture of cocoa is not now attended to, except, I believe, in the vicinity of Jeremie. It is a plant the nature of which is peculiarly delicate, and requires shade as well as moisture, and it is material to its growth, that it should be defended against the powerful rays of the sun. The labour of cultivating it is very trifling; the most important duty which it requires is to guard it during its approach to perfection against the macaw and the parrot, for wherever they touch the pod, destruction ensues. It may be considered a perennial plant, for the fruit is found upon it throughout the greater part of the year, though there are two principal crops, which are gathered in June and December. After it is gathered great care must be taken of it, for before it is prepared for market it receives a sweat by the application of salt water, which destroys any vermin that may have got into it, and, it is said, preserves its hue. Any vegetable production requiring so much care in the culture and preparation of it will never become extensively cultivated in Hayti, although it may be exceedingly profitable. The Haytians cannot confine themselves to any settled system of planting; and cocoa therefore requiring the greatest possible aid through the whole progress of its growth, as well as

much attention after it is picked, will never be an article of very general culture, however valuable it may be to the planter.

Although there are a great many fields in which the indigo grows wild, and settlements in which it was once extensively cultivated still exist, yet at this period but very little is produced. Its cultivation requires the greatest care, for it has to go through a very long process, from the picking of the leaves on which the blue is found until it is fit to be removed into chests. This is too much for the fickle Haytian planter to undergo. It is said to be a plant that cannot be cultivated without shade and moisture, and that it will not bear any other vegetable near it without sustaining great injury. It is a plant also that exhausts the soil very considerably indeed, and at the end of two years it has not only become degenerated, but the land which bore it becomes weak and unfit to be again used for its production. After the loss of Hayti to the French, they made experiments on its growth in some parts of their dominions in Europe, and they are I think stated to have been successful, but the quantity which they raised was small. The indigo from Guatemala is esteemed the finest, and in that republic is an article of very extensive cultivation, and a source of great wealth to the people who cultivate it; but the native Spaniards and the Indians of that country are a very industrious race of people, and leave nothing untried

which may improve their country, or enrich themselves.

I am astonished that the cochineal insect was never extensively sought after, and the raising of it more generally attended to in Hayti, as the cactus, or prickly pear, on which it feeds, grows throughout the whole of the country, and forms a common fence round gardens in many parts of the island. So precious an insect, and requiring no labour in the preservation of it, must be a valuable acquisition to those who would devote their time in looking after it; but the attention which it absolutely requires causes the Haytians to neglect it. It is said to have been in the time of the Spaniards an indigenous insect, and that in the districts of St. John's and Ocoa they usually collected large quantities for the European market.

The cultivation of tobacco has declined exceedingly, although the districts of St. Jago and the whole of the banks of the Yague, as well as the plains of La Vega, produced an article very little inferior in its quality to that of Cuba. The large quantities of this commodity which found their way to Jamaica were a source of great wealth to the Spaniards who cultivated it; but that vent being closed, it has now become much neglected; and as the Spanish cultivators of it have mostly left the island, and have gone to the Spanish Main or to Cuba, a little is still produced by the Haytian planters; but, as with

respect to every other article derived from the soil, they are quite careless about the culture of it, and often leave it to decay, rather than undergo the toil of preparing it for market. There are other territorial productions which formerly were considered important to raise, and which gave the planter very handsome returns, such as ginger, pimento, rice, vanilla, palma christi oil (*ricinus Americanus*), and sarsaparilla, as well as many indigenous plants that contain qualities which might make a valuable addition to the number of useful drugs now comprised in the *Materia Medica*. All these may now be said to be totally disregarded, with the exception of rice, which is occasionally grown, for I could never ascertain that any individual devoted the least of his time to cultivating them, nor did I ever see any of them exhibited as articles of commerce in any part of the country.

Having now adverted to the productions of the soil in Hayti, and the decline of agriculture through the country, it may not be improper, by way of a conclusion to this subject, to offer a few remarks on what is termed free labour, and the consequences which have arisen from it in Hayti. It seems to me quite clear that this subject is by no means well understood in Europe, and that its advocates are much too sanguine and enthusiastic when they expect that it would be found practicable to keep up the tillage of the colonies if their present sable

cultivators were to be set free. It is indisputable that the declaration of freedom to the slave population in Hayti was the ruin of the country, and that it has not been attended with those benefits which the sanguine philanthropists of Europe anticipated. The inhabitants have neither advanced in moral improvement, nor are their civil rights more respected; their condition is not changed for the better. They are not slaves, it is true, but they are suffering under greater deprivations than can well be imagined, whilst slaves have nothing to apprehend, for they are clothed, fed, and receive every medical aid in the time of sickness. The free labourer in Hayti, from innate indolence and from his state of ignorance, obtains barely enough for his subsistence. He cares not for clothing, and as to aid under sickness he cannot obtain it; thus he is left to pursue a course that sinks him to a level with the brute creation, and the reasoning faculties of the one are almost inferior to the instinct of the other, and will be so until moral instruction effect a change. Had the Haytians been prepared for freedom by moral and religious education, emancipation might have done them some good; but even then, they would not have made much progress unless agriculture had been legally imposed as a duty, and the government enforced all the laws enacted for punishing negligence and disobedience. I have never yet been able to discover in Hayti, that the blacks

since their emancipation have improved in the extraordinary degree which they are sometimes represented to have done. It is probable that those blacks who live in the towns may have improved a little. Their intercourse with the strangers who visit the country and their avocations afford them opportunities of improving, which are denied to their brethren in the interior parts. But to calculate the increase of improvement from the progress of those in the towns, is wrong. The whole mass of the people must be taken, and then, if the measure of moral improvement be ascertained, it will not be found to exceed one in fifteen. The state of ignorance prevailing among the people in the mountains and the interior parts is almost inconceivable. It appears as if the work of civilization had not commenced, and that the people had not taken one voluntary step towards improving themselves in any one thing. Neither is there one step taken by the government to force some degree of attention to those duties that may eventually improve them, unless, since the conviction of their own impolitic system of governing, the Code Rural should effect that change which ought to have been accomplished before.

If any one suppose for a moment that the present race of free labourers in Hayti resemble the free labourers of any other part of the world, he will be most egregiously deceived. There cannot be a greater distinction between two classes of people than there is be-

tween the free labourers in Hayti and those of Cuba and the southern states of North America. The first are in a state of profound ignorance, inheriting all those vices of idolatry and heathenism so peculiar to the African race; whilst the second, before they received the boon of freedom, had been taught how to value it, had received the blessings of a moral and religious education, and, although they were not admitted into the general community of free persons, but formed a class of their own, yet they were respected and became valuable as labourers. In the United States the incitements to labour are great, the most important being that of want; and until the Haytians are impelled by a stimulus equally powerful, they will not work; and that such a stimulus will be found is not probable, while we know that the labour of a few days will furnish a negro with sustenance for a month. Experiments may be tried, laws may be enacted, and encouragement given, but nothing short of coercion and want will impel the Haytian to labour; and I have my doubts as to the practicability of enforcing labour in Hayti until the people have been better instructed, and their characters become changed. As to want, the fertility of the soil is so great that it offers every security against its occurrence, by the most simple exertions. It is evident to me, that unless constant labour be required for the support of the negro, he never can become like the free labourers in other countries;

and to imagine that he will work for hire without coercion, is absolutely to imagine that to be practicable which is physically impossible. I am well aware that it has been often asserted that the Haytiens are always found willing to contract, or engage to perform any proportion of the work required on a plantation, on being fairly and equitably remunerated for their labour; but I am bold to pronounce such an assertion, come from what quarter it may, to be unfounded. It was, I aver, out of the power of a proprietor to obtain labourers, although the most liberal offers were made to them to undertake a proportion of such work as he wished to be performed.

It is perhaps unfortunate that the local authorities in Hayti are individuals without decision, and too apt to submit to the will of the people; mere nonentities, without resolution sufficient to command obedience in their several districts, although invested with power to commit, or inflict summary punishment. Hence there is much reason to presume that the enactments of the Code Rural will become inefficacious for a more general and extensive cultivation of the soil, and that agricultural pursuits will not be the least encouraged or promoted by its clauses, because the task of enforcing them devolves on the very imbecile class of persons who constitute the executive part of the government.

Before I conclude this part of my observations,

I cannot avoid repeating, that Hayti must not be held up as an example of what can be accomplished by free labour; but that it ought rather to be the beacon to warn the government of England against an experiment which may prove absolutely fatal to her colonial system. If it be not wished that a fate similar to that which has befallen Hayti should overtake our own colonies, that they should be rendered totally unproductive to the revenue of the country, and that the property invested in them should be preserved from destruction, the advisers of the crown must pause before they listen to the ill-judged suggestions of enthusiasts; for they must banish from their minds the idea that the work of cultivation can be made productive by means of free labour. Such a thing appears to me impossible. The negro, constituted as he is, has such an aversion from labour, and so great a propensity for indulgence and vice, that no prospect of advantage can stimulate him, and as for emulation it has not the slightest influence over him. Without force he will sink into lethargy, and revert to his primitive savage character, and the only feasible and effectual plan to promote his civilization is to persist in those measures which compel him to labour, inculcate morality, and tend to extirpate those vices which are inherent in the descendants of the African race. This has been often exemplified in cases of Africans who have been taken from their native soil and

educated in England. When they have returned to the spot of their nativity, and have beheld their kindred indulging in all the habits of savage life, they have thrown off all traces of civilization, and embraced with all their primeval ardour the vices of their native country. As Africa has presented various instances of this, so has it occurred also among the Indian tribes, not only of North but of South America.

I trust that my readers will not for a moment consider that I am advocating the cause of slavery; that I have the most distant wish that freedom should not be conceded to the slave population of the world; but that, if it were possible, the whole of the British colonies should be cultivated by free labourers. Nothing can be more opposite to my feelings than such a supposition, for I should be one of the first to exult were the measure practicable, and were the condition of the slave to be changed for the better by it. But I have Hayti before me as an example, as a forcible illustration of the evils likely to attend such an experiment; for I am convinced that to attempt it, would inevitably ruin all interests, be a signal for general insurrection, and the colonies would then be lost for ever as a productive possession of the crown, without improving the condition of the slave. I venture to make this declaration from a knowledge of the character of the slave. From hav-

ing, during an intercourse of twenty-two years with those countries in which slavery exists, minutely examined him in all his essential qualities, I have been only able to arrive at the conclusion, that it will be found an undertaking of extreme difficulty to change his nature so as to make freedom a good to him; and even assuming that such an attempt should be considered practicable, it is evident that it must be the work of time, and not the result of any sudden and precipitate act. But I would, with great deference, call upon my countrymen to deliberate before they venture upon further experiments, unless they wish to subvert their colonial establishments; and not to be hurried into the adoption of any measure without the most serious consideration of the consequences which are likely to ensue from it. I would call upon them to examine into the state and condition of the Haytian people, before they adopt any plan, or devise any means, for attempting to cultivate their colonies by free labour. The state of the population of this island is calculated to excite the most painful sensations, and their abject sloth, indolence, and ignorance, would, I should think, induce the warmest philanthropists of England to form the wish that their condition were rendered equal to that of the slave population of the British colonies. Their condition has not been improved by the change from slaves to free labourers. In point of fact, the slave

is infinitely better off than the free labourer of Hayti; in physical circumstances he is particularly so; and even as regards morality, the former has the advantage. I say again that Hayti, instead of being an example of what may be done by free labour in the tropics, or a proof that agriculture can be successfully carried on by it, stands as a beacon to caution us against the rock on which the prosperity of the colonies is likely to be wrecked.

CHAPTER XII.

Commerce.—State of exports and imports.—Exactions at the customs—depredations and impositions.—Foreign merchants—disabilities they labour under.—Insecurity.—State of finances.—Revenue, etc.

COMMERCE, like agriculture, in Hayti is at a very low ebb, and presents a very discouraging view of the state of that country. Without agriculture commerce can receive but little encouragement; and if the cultivation of the soil decline, commerce must decline also, the one being unquestionably dependent on the other. If there be a failure in those territorial productions which constitute the staple commodities of Hayti, there will be nothing to excite commercial enterprise and speculation, and consequently the intercourse with foreigners will decrease, to the great injury of the country. Were Hayti in a situation to become an entrepôt for foreign property, or were it so circumstanced as to have the means of carrying on an extensive trade with the South American states, it might probably relieve her in some measure from the heavy weight with which she is now borne down. But she has no such intercourse, nor are the people in the least conversant with the

nature of it: their knowledge of commerce not extending much beyond the limits of mere petty bartering, and all important commercial dealings are centred in the foreign houses established there. The British, Americans, and even the French, will not confide in the integrity of the Haytians; all their engagements are effected, all their arrangements are made by the agents from their respective countries, who have patents to reside in the several parts of the republic. An attempt was made to induce the legislative body to enact a law for compelling foreigners to consign their cargoes or shipments to Haytian citizen agents; and I believe Boyer was much disposed to countenance the proposition, but it met with great disapprobation from those individuals in the chamber of communes who were on friendly terms with the foreigners, and who had discretion enough to foresee that such a law would be destructive of that commerce which they were so anxious to extend. This iniquitous law was proposed by M. Elic and M. Ardouin, the representatives for Port au Prince, and it was supported by other members of the chamber, who, as native agents, resided in the several ports, but decried by those who apprehended the serious check which foreign intercourse would receive from so unwise and impolitic a measure. It was, however, negatived, and the proposers and supporters of it drew upon themselves much obloquy and reproach.

The Haytian government has often promulgated very glowing abstracts of the flourishing state of its commerce, and would seem to expect that such accounts should be received as proofs of the *rising* greatness of the country. But the very documents themselves are *primâ facie* evidence of their being a fabrication. They are gross impositions to lead strangers into the belief that the intercourse is of importance, and that considerable advantages accrue from it to those nations who engage in it with spirit, and pursue it without relaxation.

As there is no individual wealth in the country, the means of the people depend upon their own exertions in the culture of the soil; and therefore as cultivation has dwindled from the want of industry, those means must have become exceedingly circumscribed. Hence it is not probable that the annual value of the imports into the country can have so far exceeded the exports from it, as the following statèments, which have been already before the public, particularly exhibit.

The return for the year 1821, being the year after the annexation of Christophe's dominions to the republic, gives the following balance of commerce with foreign nations:—

In 1821.	Dollars.	Cts.
Valuation of imports to Hayti	10,897,470	90
Ditto of exports from Hayti	6,856,658	21
Excess	4,040,812	79

In 1822.		
Valuation of imports	13,017,890	19
Ditto of exports	9,050,597	6
Excess	3,987,493	13

In 1823.		
Valuation of imports	13,749,012	46
Ditto of exports	9,267,787	16
Excess	4,481,225	30
	<u>8</u>	<u>12,509,531 22</u>

Making an excess of imports into the country over the means of the people from the value of the exports, in three years, no less a sum than twelve million, five hundred and nine thousand, five hundred and thirty-one dollars and twenty-two centimes, about treble the amount of the collective wealth of the people through the whole country! In the two succeeding years the exports and imports have kept, it would appear, an equal pace. By the same documents also, the proportion of the above balances with the respective countries is particularly detailed, and the three principal ones I shall enumerate.

In 1821.	IMPORTS.		EXPORTS.	
	Val. in Dolls. Cts.		Val. in Dolls. Cts.	
Great Britain	3,254,439	5	2,501,729	7
United States	4,906,178	4	1,720,419	65
France	2,296,407	77	2,284,691	74
Holland, Germany, etc. . .	440,446	4	549,817	75
	<hr/>		<hr/>	
	Total	10,897,470 90	6,856,658	21
	<hr/>		<hr/>	

In 1822.

Great Britain	3,661,244	0	3,002,074	88
United States	6,641,570	72	3,293,890	86
France	2,262,411	8	2,280,800	50
Holland, Germany, etc. . .	452,664	39	453,630	82
	<hr/>		<hr/>	
	Total	13,017,890 19	9,030,397	6
	<hr/>		<hr/>	

In 1823.

Great Britain	4,506,216	60	3,108,622	6
United States	6,056,840	18	3,327,790	5
France	2,640,186	0	2,360,800	0
Holland, Germany, etc. . .	545,769	68	470,575	5
	<hr/>		<hr/>	
	Total	13,749,012 46	9,267,787	16
	<hr/>		<hr/>	

I think it must be admitted that documents like the foregoing carry on the face of them evident marks of their spurious character. Although it is a known fact that they were issued from the bureau of government, it cannot for a moment be be-

lieved that there could be such an extraordinary excess of imports over the exports in a country the credit of which has been so often impeached, and the integrity of the government and people so much questioned. It is not probable,—it is not credible,—that the enterprising, yet wary, American should so implicitly confide in Haytian integrity and honour as to become a creditor of the latter to the extent of nearly nine million three hundred thousand dollars; and that the British trader should be led into a similar mistaken confidence, whilst France and every other country appear to have acted with the greatest possible precaution, and always to have obtained a *quid pro quo*—a consideration in return for an equal value given.

Nothing can be more discouraging to the commercial intercourse with Hayti, than the irregular system under which every operation is conducted, from the highest to the lowest office of the state. The delays and procrastinations of the officers of the customs are exceedingly injurious both to the consignee and to the vessel: a studied dilatoriness pervades all their proceedings. This delay is well known to the government, and repeated representations and remonstrances have been sent in to the proper authorities, and some remedy particularly sought for; but they have all been unsuccessful, and the foreign merchants were left to pursue the best course they possibly could, to obtain some little ex-

pedition in their progress through the customs. The only successful way to obtain this despatch is by one that never fails in its aim, *that of a douceur*, for the principal officers are open to bribes, and they seem determined not to do their duty without one, so long as the government sanctions their conduct.

The inconvenience as well as the impositions under which commerce labours in respect to the Haytian tariff furnishes another ground of complaint among foreigners. This is a matter which ought to be taken into the most serious consideration of the respective governments who have representatives in that country. The delay which ensues between the landing of the merchant's property, and the examination of it by the officers of the customs for the purpose of ascertaining its qualities, agreeably to the regulations of the tariff, is not only most injurious, but in Hayti every thing becomes so exposed that depredations are not unfrequent, and the injured party has no remedy. The officers of the customs afford no redress, nor will the government make any compensation; and in a country where theft is so prevalent, and justice so seldom overtakes the perpetrator, there is but little security for property. I have seen many instances of goods being most unwarrantably exposed, and all the remonstrances of the consignee have been unavailing; there appeared on the contrary every reason to suspect connivance on the part of those whose duty it was to protect the pro-

perty against those persons who are always on the alert to plunder, for they were negligent, and shewed no wish to detect offenders, and bring them to justice.

The way in which goods are valued agreeably to the tariff is a monstrous imposition on the trader, and imperatively calls for the most prompt and efficient remedy. Many of the articles of British manufacture are actually subjected to a duty equal to twenty per cent. instead of twelve, from the excess of valuation, the tariff fixing a value nearly double the actual sale price of the goods; and although it may be argued that the consumer pays the duty, yet it seriously affects the sale of the article, and in most cases is felt very grievously by the consignor. In no other country have I ever witnessed such impositions and such depredations as are committed in Hayti, where the injured individuals have not the least possible chance of redress. The British government has been, however, I have no doubt, apprised of the impositions practised by the Haytians on our commerce: hence it has been found adviseable to obtain some change, and in future to protect it against similar attacks. The appointment of a consul-general of talents and decision will, I am confident, bring the Haytian government and President Boyer to a proper sense of justice towards these British subjects who have so long suffered from these impositions. A trade fet-

tered with such heavy duties, and charges of various description, where payment is extremely uncertain and insecure, from the character of the people and the state of the country, can never prosper if these exactions and depredations be not effectually restrained. I have heard of the ingenuity and dexterity evinced by the people of the South American states in abstracting merchandize that may be exposed; but I am confident that the Haytian may challenge competition, and on a trial of their respective merits, I have no doubt of his being pronounced the victor. The internal commerce of Hayti also as regards foreigners is rendered quite unprofitable by the absurd regulations which fetter it. The foreign merchant has no latitude given to his operations; he is not permitted to trade with any but Haytian citizens, and to them alone can he offer his goods. Though he might be able to effect a more advantageous arrangement with other importers or consignees like himself, he cannot even dispose of the produce of the country, should he have an excess beyond the quantity which he may require for exportation; he must ship it, however disadvantageous it may be. Neither can the foreign merchant dispose of his goods upon the coast; he is forced to place them under the agency of a Haytian citizen for that purpose, and confide in people possessing but little integrity.

All the produce which the foreigner purchases for

exportation must pass through the hands of a broker, to whom he is obliged to pay a commission. He is not allowed to make his own purchases; but this difficulty is obviated by an understanding with the broker, that he shall be paid the commission on what the merchant may purchase himself. This commission is about six pence per one hundred pounds weight of coffee, and other articles in proportion. The French, by the arrangements of 1825, enjoy a much more extensive intercourse with Hayti than they did previously, and from their paying only half duties both on imports and exports, they are able to compete with the British and Americans, who before had decidedly the advantage. I do not know whether any arrangements are likely to be effected, by which British commerce will be put on the same footing as that of France, although I should hope that such a thing is not improbable, or else the little intercourse that now exists will decline more, for the French will be able to undersell us, having so great an advantage as half duties both ways.

In a commercial point of view Hayti presents but little encouragement to the speculator or adventurer. There is no extensive sphere for mercantile operation: every thing is confined within a narrow compass. The foreigner, with unlimited pecuniary means, has no opportunity of employing them to advantage. The heavy exactions of the government are too burthensome to admit of any successful ap-

plication of capital, and to invest it under the impression of security would be an error that might bring on very fatal results. No such thing as security exists in that country ; a foreigner cannot hold property in the soil, and he cannot, without a great deal of inconvenience and expense, obtain a lien on the real property of a citizen. To bring it to sale for the purpose of liquidating a debt, would be impossible, from the corrupt administration of justice ; for the judicial seat is filled by persons who have not the least idea of either law or equity. Under all these circumstances, Hayti cannot advance much in commerce, for she holds out no inducements, and until the government remove the restraints which they have put upon it, and give it greater latitude and freedom, it will not be worth the foreigner's seeking, for he cannot benefit by his operations, and he is exposed to inconceivable difficulties, and often to severe losses.

The finances of Hayti are exceedingly low ; no country can labour under greater depression in its financial state than the republic at this moment, and there does not appear the least probability of a revival. Without agriculture and commerce, I cannot see how they are to be recruited, and as those are at the lowest ebb, despair seems to me inevitable. Their application to the French government to extend the period for the payment of the debt due for the recognition of independence, is corroborative of

their impoverished condition. The receipts from all their sources of income are small, and their expenditure is large, and the government is often obliged to borrow money of the merchants in anticipation of duties they may have to pay, for the purpose of meeting the exigences of the country; and this has become so very frequent of late, that they have met with some refusals, merchants entertaining much doubt as to the safety of making such advances.

The public expenditure is estimated at about five millions of dollars annually, which one would think cannot be true, when a reference is made to the produce of the country. It is certain their ways and means fall considerably short of that amount. The customs on imports and exports produce about two million two hundred thousand dollars annually, and the territorial duties on produce, duty on houses, patents, tax on markets, and other taxes of minor consideration, about the same amount; so that the total revenue of the republic does not exceed four million four hundred thousand dollars. On this I can place some reliance; for the best informed persons in the country, both natives and foreigners, state that amount to be correct, and that it is impossible that it can be greater, from the condition into which both commerce and agriculture have sunk. The government, these last two years, anticipated a large revenue from the produce of the mines of

Cibao, but that scheme turned out to be a fallacious ground-work of expectation; and a great deal also was expected to be realized by sales of the government lands, but this also has failed, from landed property being considered at the present moment of very insecure tenure. These two anticipated sources of revenue display the weakness of the government, and betray their want of foresight in an amazing degree, for nothing could be more inconsistent than to calculate upon repairing the finances of the country by hidden treasures, or think of obtaining any thing from mines which, had they been known to be worth working, would never have been neglected by the Spaniards or the French. With respect to government lands, I cannot conceive how any expectation of deriving benefit from them could have been entertained, when it is so notorious that the people have not a shilling to invest in the soil; and the constitution will not permit Europeans, or white persons from any country, to hold property in their own right, were they disposed to do so.

No means therefore present themselves by which the finances of Hayti can be improved, except the cultivation of its lands in good earnest, not by partial labour, but by the most persevering industry, and by enforcing the law for culture. Nothing short of the most strenuous exertions in agriculture can save Hayti from the ruin which threatens her, or can shelter her against the storm which

seems to be gathering round her. Setting aside the produce of the soil, there is no other source from which any aid to the revenue can be derived ; and if that be not attended to, and an increase immediately obtained, the little commercial intercourse that remains will dwindle away, and Hayti will sink into an irrecoverable state of poverty.

Towards both the military and civil establishments they are exceedingly illiberal. They do not adequately requite either for their services, which causes them all to be open to bribes, by which the revenue becomes defrauded. The soldiers of the republic are so irregularly paid—and at times not paid at all—that they make up by plunder wherever they have an opportunity. This is therefore a mistaken principle of economy ; but it is similar to every other proceeding of the government, and carries with it every mark of absurdity. To reason with them in matters of finance would have no effect, for the vanity of Boyer and his chief advisers is such, that they think they have arrived at perfection ; they arrogate to that system of government which they have established the praise of being the most efficient, if not the most powerful of all the modern republics.

The same want of system and method, which is seen in every other branch of the government, pervades the financial department. The head of that department has no power ; he is a mere nominal cha-

acter, and is often undeservedly exposed to censure from the extraordinary conduct of the president. It is not an uncommon circumstance for the president to issue an order on the treasurer for payment to some individual who has had a demand upon government, and after having issued it, and before an application can be made for payment, a subsequent order has been given to suspend the payment of it for a time, by which injustice the treasurer is subjected to great obloquy and abuse. This is not an uncommon thing; many of the British and American merchants will bear testimony to such facts, for they have often been placed in this predicament. Many to my knowledge, who have had occasion to transmit money to Port au Prince from some of the distant ports, have paid the amount into the treasury, or some other government department at his own port, and received a check on the treasurer-general for the amount, which, when presented, has often been refused, and it has been by great difficulty, and after great delay, that the check has been paid. So little confidence can be placed in the integrity of the government, that people are no longer disposed to have faith in it.

I have, I hope, said enough to deter mercantile adventurers from falling into the trap laid for their property, by the high sounding and vaunting reports published by the eulogists of Hayti for the purpose of delusion.

CHAPTER XIII.

Haytian jurisprudence.—State of the courts.—Trial by jury.—The judges.—Justices of the peace, their corruption.—State of the church.—Account of a Missionary.—Schism in the church.—Moral and religious state of the people—shewn by their mode of living.—Description of this mode.—Habitations described.—Furniture, &c.—Education.—Its progress.—Government do not encourage it.—Remarks on the consequences of not doing so.—Qualifications of senators and communes shew the state of knowledge and education.

It is necessary that I should make a few remarks on the subject of Haytian jurisprudence, and endeavour to shew my readers what description of personages preside over the civil and criminal departments of justice, as well as explain what sort of an individual a Haytian justice of the peace is.

I think that every person who has had an occasion to visit Hayti, and has been an observer of the way in which justice is generally dispensed, will accord with me in the opinion that there may be exhibited the symbol of justice, but that equity is never dealt out in spirit and in substance; and that whenever it becomes unavoidable that recourse should be had to the courts of law for a decision on a disputed question, it is ten to one in favour of that

suitor who is the most liberal in his bribes to the judges. It is a fact which cannot be controverted, that justice in Hayti may be bought; and those who are appointed to administer it, cannot escape the imputation of making the chair of justice the vehicle of corruption. Justice never flows from a pure and unvitiated source. The civil and criminal codes of Hayti do certainly provide for its due administration, and for the protection of property and individuals against molestation; but there is a laxity in the courts which deserves the severest reprobation, and calls for a prompt remedy. There is so much procrastination, and such inconceivable dilatoriness in the officers of the courts, that cases of a civil nature, although of no importance and capable of being decided at the first glance, are oftentimes heard and reheard, considered and reconsidered, before any judgment is given; and those who may be committed for trial for an alleged offence, are alike subjected to the tardy proceedings of the law, and the innocent often suffers, by an unjust imprisonment before trial, equal in duration to that which is awarded to an offender after his conviction. The supineness and apathy of the judges are the subjects of general condemnation, and their want of discernment and discrimination renders it frequently necessary to reverse or suspend the execution of their judgments.

The law establishing a trial by jury in criminal

cases passed the legislative body, I believe, in 1826, but I have not heard of any instance in which it has been acted upon, nor do I think, from the general incapacity of the people, that it will be acted upon. If it be, I cannot answer for the consequences that might ensue in all cases of crime, where a long investigation of the different allegations which constitute it took place. Amongst the people who would be thought eligible to be summoned on a jury by the court, few only, if any, would be found capable of determining upon the guilt or innocence of the party accused, and those probably would be led by their passions to convict or acquit, without the least reference to the charge or the evidence adduced. The trial by jury in Hayti may be a great blessing to the people when they are taught to estimate its importance, as the means of preserving their rights and liberties. But as they, at the present moment, know but little of liberty but the name, and have but a very superficial knowledge of what constitutes their rights, they are not fit to be trusted with the performance of so important a duty as to decide upon the innocence or guilt of their fellow men. Such being the state of knowledge, I feel confident that the trial by jury will not be adopted in practice until the people become more enlightened, and knowledge be more generally diffused throughout the country.

The court of cassation, which is the court of appeal from the courts civil and criminal, exceeds, in

the tardiness of its proceedings, all the other legal institutions of the country. There is no such thing as an equitable decision emanating from the judges, for they are under the surveillance of the president, and before they give their judgment, have recourse to him to know whether their opinions meet his approbation. If he concur, they give judgment accordingly, but should he differ, and the question be one in which the state is a party, or any state officer, then they are obliged to reconsider the case, and to see *if they have not taken a wrong view of the question at issue*. After a short period,—for it is incumbent on them to preserve their characters as judges in equity,—they pronounce judgment with great solemnity, and with as much appearance of that conscious rectitude of proceeding as if their investigation of the subject had been the most unbiassed, and their decision founded on the purest principles of law and justice.

The proceedings in the lower courts are somewhat extraordinary in civil cases. If a creditor institute a suit against a debtor in one district, and obtain a verdict, the defendant is permitted to appeal from the sentence to the court of the adjoining district, and so on in succession throughout the whole series of district courts; and if the last confirm the judgment of the first, the defendant can then move it into the court of cassation, and in the event of that court confirming the judgment of the courts below,

he may appeal from it to the president, and apply for a new trial in those courts, so that the contest proceeds *ad infinitum*, however clear may be the proof adduced of the debt being just. These unjust and inequitable acts of the judges and president are common; and foreigners who are obliged to resort to legal means for the recovery of their debts, find it attended with so much procrastination and expense, in addition to the uncertainty of the result, that they mostly wait the effect of time for the recovery of their debts, rather than have recourse to law.

Another most extraordinary, and I call it a most unexampled power over the courts, is vested in the hands of an officer denominated the grand judge. He can stay execution after the judgment is confirmed as long as he may deem it adviseable; and although at the time the party is in possession of means to liquidate the debt, he frequently gives him one, two, or three years to pay it. In the mean time, the debtor may dispose of his property in a clandestine manner, the creditor being left to lament not only the loss of his debt, but the heavy charges to which he had been put through the whole of the delays and chicanery of the law, and the weakness and unfairness of the judges.

The British merchants in Hayti have been subjected to the most intolerable impositions, through the unjust proceedings of the courts of justice; but it is probable that some check will now be put

to these iniquitous and nefarious proceedings. The consul-general is too wary, and too sensible of the evil, not to be on the alert; and although he may not have the power to remedy the past, I am confident he will prevent a recurrence of it in future. His known perseverance and determination have shaken the courts already, and his presence there will, I think, insure to his countrymen that justice for which they have so long sought in vain.

The judges form perhaps the most extraordinary selection of personages that could ever have been found in any country; and their avocations previously to their elevation to the judicial seat, have never been professional. The grand judge, Mons. Freshnell, is an infirm man of colour, nearly eighty years of age. Until he arrived at middle age, he had been actively and successfully employed in the marauding career of a pirate. His legal knowledge is just what might have been expected from his previous avocations. He is a modest old man, it is true; for when his present appointment was offered to him he declined it, as he said himself, from his incompetency to fill it, and to perform the duties which it required. Boyer however insisted on his accepting it, and remarked "that it did not require talent or legal knowledge to execute the duties of it, that he had only to do as he was directed by such orders as he might receive from the bureau of government"; so that, in fact, the first law officer of

the republic is a mere tool of the government, possessed neither of capacity nor power. He is a mere instrument of the president, to move and act as he may be directed.

The chief judge of the court of cassation is a black, and, like that race in general, exceedingly vain both of his talents and high station. He is a small shopkeeper, but generally called a merchant (negociant), and in that way he is more respectable than in his judicial capacity. The other judges of this court are all engaged in some mercantile or similar calling, and exhibit neither the dignity of expounders of the law, nor the grave nor placid exterior demeanour of men on whom devolves the important duty of distributing justice with an equal hand.

Monsieur Dieu Donney, chief judge of the lower courts, is a man of colour, and may be considered as possessing some little knowledge in the laws of the republic, and would, in all probability, do justice were he permitted to do so. He is said to be a great opponent to the practice of suspending judgments when ready for execution, and has declared it, in the presence of the president, to be unjust and unconstitutional, and that before long it would inevitably be the means of driving all foreigners from the country, for it gave countenance to the fraudulent designs of those who were in the habit of obtaining a large amount in goods on credit, disposing of them immediately for less than they actually cost, for the pur-

pose of realizing the money and investing it in lands, when they knew that in the first place they could, by the delays of the court, prevent judgment being taken for two years, and after judgment, might obtain three years for its liquidation; and in fact, perhaps in the end, never pay at all, because in the interim they might dispose of, or make over their property to another, in trust, and laugh at their creditor with impunity.

He is, I think, an upright man, and although his talents are not of the first order amongst his Haytian brethren, yet he makes up for this by his integrity, and gives great satisfaction by the justice of his decisions; but he is often controlled by the majority of his brother judges, who are as corrupt as they are ignorant.

The idea which some of the judges have of conscience is somewhat singular, and may not be unworthy of notice. They are all very ill paid it is true, and consequently they are open to bribery, as I have before mentioned; and whenever a good bribe is offered, they never consult their consciences about the justice of the case, but give a verdict as a *quid pro quo* for the *douceur*.

With regard to that respectable officer, a justice of the peace in Hayti, he is almost indescribable, being a compound of bad qualities. Speaking of them generally, they are what may be not incorrectly denominated retailers of justice, and dispose of it to

that person who can give the most. They are persons certainly not very judiciously selected, and in the different districts where they reside, they exercise their power very arbitrarily, unless the parties who may unfortunately be brought before them, for offences committed within their jurisdiction, can afford to pay well for a little lenity. An attempt was made by the justice of peace at Port au Prince, who is the uncle of Boyer's mistress, to impose on a British sailor, who had been illegally discharged from an American vessel, in which he had sailed, without payment of his wages, acting, it was said, under the influence of the agents of the vessel. But the British consul-general not only remonstrated strongly with this personage, but threatened to make it a subject of representation to the president; the fellow however having afterwards made some submission, and apologized for his conduct, the matter was permitted to drop.

Having touched upon the administration of the laws of Hayti, I shall now offer a few observations on the church establishment and the moral and religious condition of the people.

The established religion of Hayti is the Roman Catholic, the constitution, however, tolerates other forms according to the letter of the law; but although it does tolerate other forms of worship, the municipal authorities take great care that the Protestant sectarians shall encounter every possible obstacle when

they wish to meet for the purpose of divine worship. They will not permit their meetings to be held in a public manner, and the inhabitants are cautioned against receiving them into their houses unless they desist from preaching. What is therefore called toleration in Hayti it would be difficult to define. It is not many years since, that a missionary from one of the societies of England (I think he was a Wesleyan) was obliged to leave the country, although that individual bore a most exemplary character, and had very studiously avoided exciting the envy of the Catholic priests, or giving the least umbrage to any person of that persuasion. He set about the duties of his mission with all the ardour of his sect, and gained many followers, but the rancour of the Catholic clergy was roused by his success, and their malice soon became conspicuous. This very worthy man, therefore, was subjected to great insult. His removal was suggested to the president, and the anathemas of the church were threatened unless he complied with their request. He was represented by them to have aimed at subverting the doctrines of the church of Rome, and of introducing heresy among the people, to have preached disobedience to the established authorities, and to have ridiculed the supremacy of the Pope. The weakness and submission of the president forced him to expel this individual from the island. It is said, however, that Boyer secretly en-

abled him to do so, by presenting him with a sum of money, and expressing the regret he felt that any causes of a religious character should have called upon him to exercise the power with which the constitution had armed him, as he individually was sensible of the unreasonableness of that jealousy which is too predominant in the followers of the Church of Rome, and which he could not but silently deprecate.

The Catholic church in Hayti appears to be in a very disorganized state. The schism in the church which happened a few years ago has not been healed, and Boyer, by expelling the bishop of Port au Prince and Pere Jérémie, (Jeremiah O'Flinns, an Irish priest,) has incurred severe papal censures, which, it is said, he has taken no steps to remove. Formerly the church establishment in Hayti was numerous, there being no less than an archbishop, three bishops, and about sixty priests and monks. But at this time there remain only about thirty or forty of the latter class distributed in the different parts of the country, and it is the determination of the government not to increase their number; the others will in future be excluded, as the poverty of the state requires the revenue of the church in aid of its exigences.

Some of the priests who officiate, are the most abject and miserable wretches I think I ever saw. They are poor, and in some of the interior parts they de-

rive their sole support from the voluntary contributions of the inhabitants, but those in the principal towns have a tolerable income, and seem to enjoy the good things of this world in common with their flock. Those who attend at the shrine of Alta Gracia at Higuey are said to be rich, but their emoluments arise principally from the offerings of the poor deluded bigots who go there on their pilgrimage.

The people in general seem to care but little about religion, and the conduct of the leading men of the state sets religion and morality at defiance. The female Haytians who attend divine worship, and go regularly to mass, are not actuated by any religious feeling. Going to church is a mere matter of parade with them, the sabbath being a day of festivities, and not set aside for religious devotion. The female congregations which frequent the churches in Hayti appear better prepared for an opera, or some other public amusement, than for the sacred duties of offering up their prayers in adoration of the Deity.

The men seldom or never go to mass, except on the days particularly set apart by the government as public fêtes. On these occasions the president and all the officers of Hayti go in procession, but the idea of devotion, I believe, never enters their contemplation. Such days are merely set aside for celebrating some particular event, which it is wished should be handed

down to posterity. These occasions present only the external symbol of religion, the whole people being either ignorant or careless of its real character. Their manner and appearance during the celebration of mass shew that they have no inward feelings of piety or devotion.

The moral state of the people is at the lowest possible ebb. In the towns there is perhaps the appearance of morality, and persons are apt to conclude that they have made some progress in general, from what they have observed in such places where opportunities are afforded of seeing those of the inhabitants who have had the benefits of education; but in the interior there is an infinite difference, and the people are in the lowest state of moral degradation—everything shews it, their habits and manner of living. In secluded places they congregate, and follow all the propensities of nature, and indulge in all the vices of lust and sensuality without limits and without control. It is not possible, I think, for any one to visit their habitations, without returning from them with a conviction that their present state is much below any thing that can be imagined to have existed in the worst state of society in any part of the world. In the new republics of South America, in which society is very backward also, the prevailing habits present some appearance of improvement; but in the country districts of Hayti there are no demonstrations of advancement from that deplor-

able ignorance in which they seem to have existed from the period of the revolution; no change in their loose and dissolute manners and customs, but a fixed and determined perseverance in all the primitive vices of the African race.

If the interior of the houses of the highest class of people even in the towns display nothing indicative of that peculiar regard for propriety and cleanliness which we have heard of as being so characteristic of the people of colour, in the tropics, what will be said of the habitations of the cultivators in the interior of Hayti, where they resemble more the huts of the most savage tribes of the eastern and the western world? The former are far from being in such a condition as to make them desirable residences; for in fact they exhibit nothing approaching to that state which is so common with people of colour in other colonies, the sluggish occupiers caring little about cleanliness except in the exterior ornaments of their persons. The huts of the interior are merely mud edifices with two rooms for the accommodation of the whole family, and in which the slaves of the British colonies, and particularly in Jamaica, would disdain to reside; nor would their proprietors offer them such miserable abodes. In these houses filth and every species of uncleanness prevail, for the people give themselves entirely up to their indolent and lazy habits. It is common to see the pigs and poultry herding with

the family, and whilst the latter are at their repast, the former are in attendance, “ picking the crumbs that fall from their master’s table.” One bed often suffices for all the inmates. The furniture consists of a very few articles, a table, a stool, two chairs, a side board, or rather a tray on four legs, and some bowls made from the calabash as substitutes for earthenware, with an iron pot or two for culinary purposes. Every thing seems useful, there is nothing ornamental, except now and then a small pier glass in a gilt frame decorated mostly with the labours of Arachne, and a wood-cut of the cap of liberty, considered to be an emblematical representation of Haytian heroism.

It may not be improper to offer a few remarks on the subject of education in the republic, and which seems to me to have been represented in colours far too glowing. Most people, I apprehend, have formed an opinion of the progress of education from what they have perceived in Port au Prince, Cape Haytien, and one or two others of the principal places, as though those places contained the largest proportion of the population. This is an erroneous impression, as the youth in the country parts, not having the means of education placed within their reach, are brought up in the darkest ignorance. This is immediately seen at any of the little villages through which the traveller has to pass, for making an inquiry at many of them if

there were any schools, the answer was generally "there were none, except at Port au Prince." In the north, the public schools established by Christophe, who really made efforts to disseminate knowledge and to improve the morals of the people, have all been suspended and the houses turned into barracks for the military, to the utter disgrace of the government.

In Port au Prince there is one school supported by the republic upon the Lancasterian principle, and a military school for young men who are intended for the scientific departments of the army, and there is a similar establishment at the cape; but the few schools which are to be met with in the large towns are merely private institutions to which youth are sent whose parents have the means of supporting them. The ignorant cultivators give themselves no concern about procuring moral education for their children; and on the score of religion they seldom feel the least anxiety, for three-fourths of them are at this moment as rank idolaters as their forefathers were in Africa.

In the towns also it should be understood the people are mostly engaged in some mercantile avocations, or else they are handicraftsmen, or persons holding some civil or military appointments. They therefore have not only an opportunity of educating their children, being contiguous to the schools, but they have the pecuniary means for doing so. The

cultivators in the country have neither; money in particular they never have, except just as much as the sale of their vegetables on a Sunday brings them, but which is generally disposed of in payment for the salt provisions, and the supply of taffia required for their weekly consumption. They have no reserve for purposes of improvement, nor are they taught to improve; but the government seems to consider that to keep them in ignorance is the most secure way to insure tranquillity and repose to the country. That such is the feeling of the government I think is quite evident from the one hundred and seventy-eighth article of the Code Rural, which I have given before, and which orders that children shall be sent to their fathers “to follow their condition of life.” As long therefore as their parents continue in ignorance and immorality, it is clear that the children have no means of profiting by a good example. It is the prevailing sentiment of the people of colour, that the blacks should be kept in their present state of ignorance, and so long as the government be composed of people of the former class, the latter will remain in their present abject condition. As the negro is now situated, he is in a worse state of degradation than the slave; for although he is free, he is almost excluded from the general mass of the population; he is marked with the name of freedom, whilst he actually groans under despotism and oppression. In this state he is likely to remain,

until some general change be effected in Hayti which shall place him in a state of unresisted intercourse with the more enlightened portion of the people, by which he may be taught properly to estimate the value of liberty, and made to participate in those blessings which it is wont to diffuse.

I do not know a circumstance that shews more clearly the backward state of knowledge and education in Hayti than the little progress made by the representatives of the people in the senate and in the chamber of communes, for there are many of them who can neither read nor write. In the senate, out of twenty-four members I could mention four or five who, at the time I left the island, could not write their names, nay, not even their initials. It may appear strange that the president, who has the selection of the members who occupy seats in the senate, should appoint men thus incapable and uneducated to become his council and advisers. However strange this may seem to others, it excites no surprise in my mind, because I am convinced, and it is a matter of general notoriety, that Boyer wants only mere passive instruments to obey, and not canvass or oppose any measures emanating from the government. Out of about seventy-two members composing the chamber of communes, there are twenty-six equally ignorant, and their only qualification seems to be a sufficient degree of pliancy to yield a ready assent to any proposition which has

been submitted by the government for their consideration.

All that government wants of the members of either house is to keep up the appearance of legislative deliberation, to give a colour to their own proceedings, and form a cloak to cover their plans of oppression and rapacity. The persons selected in the different communes as representatives, are those who have been recommended by the government, for the people have no voice, or, what is nearly the same, they dare not raise it against those whom the president has recommended to their choice. These abject representatives are mere tools in the hands of government, and as they are well paid, they care little or nothing for the duties of the station to which they are elevated.

The senator with his one thousand two hundred dollars per annum, and the commune with his eight hundred dollars received from the treasury, would not hesitate to accede to any proposition, however monstrous and unconstitutional, in order to secure his seat, and preserve the favour of the government.

CHAPTER XIV.

Population.—Census 1824, opinion on it.—Further statement.—Manner of taking the census.—Checks to increase.—Decrease is evident.—Nature of those checks.—Increase in United States according to Raymond.—Conclusion.

It is a very difficult task to ascertain the exact number of the population in Hayti, and I may in all probability not be correct in the statement which was given to me, although I am convinced that the individual from whom I received it would not knowingly have offered me a document containing an erroneous calculation. Indeed I place great reliance on this statement, because the official station of its author affords him information which is not easily to be obtained from any other source. It appears that the census said to have been taken in the year 1824, and the particulars of which I have in my possession as presented to me personally by Boyer, is a fabrication of government, promulgated intentionally to astonish the nations of Europe with the rapid increase of the population since the expulsion of the French in the time of Dessalines. This census when taken into consideration will appear almost incredible, and, from the

irregular manner in which, even on the confession of its advocates, it is acknowledged to have been taken, it will be found unworthy of being received as an authentic return. It states the number as follows:—

In the ancient Spanish part.....	61,468
In the part formerly under Christophe	567,721
In the part originally the republic established by Petion	504,146
Total.....	<u>933,535</u>

The incredibility attached to such a statement as the preceding will be manifested, when it is remembered that in 1802, in the time of Toussaint, the population

In the ancient French part was, according to Hum- boldt, about	575,000
And in the Spanish part it did not exceed.....	<u>95,000</u>
Total.....	<u>470,000</u>

Now it must I think be admitted that such an increase as appears from a comparison of these two statements cannot be probable. That the population of any country should double in twenty-two years, cannot for a moment be believed. Here it is represented to have more than doubled, for there is a decrease in the Spanish part of nearly thirty-four thousand, and the subsequent war with Le Clerc and the massacres of Dessalines, as well as the long internal contests between Christophe and

Petion, are not taken in the scale of decrease. The census of 1824, therefore, will, I should think, appear erroneous. That it is *prima facie* a fabrication, cannot be denied; and the advantage expected to result from this falsification I cannot comprehend. By the statement to which I have alluded as given to me, and on which I can rely as containing a more correct return of the population of 1824, Hayti appears to contain:—

Blacks	608,400
Coloured of all degrees	90,700
Strangers domiciled	<u>16,400</u>
Total.....	<u>715,500</u>

And about three hundred white inhabitants, consisting of foreign merchants, tradesmen, handicraftsmen, &c.

Of the above number, the divisions are stated in this manner:—

In the ancient Spanish part	54,000
The part formerly Christophe's	302,300
The part originally the republic under Petion	<u>359,200</u>
Total.....	<u>715,500</u>

This account of the population carries on the face of it much more probability than the statement of Boyer. Indeed I took no little pains to inquire of individuals conversant with the subject, and they

spoke decidedly against the census of 1824, giving it as their opinion that it could not have exceeded seven hundred thousand, at all events seven hundred and twenty thousand of all degrees. It was their further opinion that the population had not lately increased, but on the contrary, from what they could observe in the different parts through which they had occasion to travel on their mercantile concerns, there appeared a great check, and that there was unquestionably an annual decrease.

The manner in which the government proceeds in taking a census must inevitably lead to inaccuracy and error, even where there is no design to deceive. A census is taken in each arrondissement by the general commanding, aided by the justices of the peace in the several parishes composing it, and as there are no registers kept in those parishes of births or deaths, every thing is left to estimation, occasional visits being made to several parts of them to ascertain the number of settlers. Now many of these proprietors have possessions in two or three parishes within the arrondissement; and the returns of persons composing their family are made in each of them, and thereby swell the aggregate of the population much beyond the actual number. And further, the census is not taken simultaneously in the several arrondissements, but at different periods, and it is said, that the cultivators who move from one to the other, are returned in two places.

If the people were industrious, and relaxed from those vicious courses in which they now too much indulge; if marriage were more generally diffused, and morality inculcated; if some system were adopted which would tend towards a removal of the evils which now prevail through the republic, the population would in all probability increase, but until these are accomplished, such a result is not to be expected.

It has often been argued that labour in the colonies is a check upon increase, and that may be possible when the labour is excessive. But I think it will be admitted that a moderate portion of labour has a contrary effect, and this is exemplified in those states of America where slavery exists. In those states the increase is very great, and excites considerable apprehension lest the slave population should become too powerful a body to be kept in subjection. Raymond, an American author, and a political economist, in his remarks on the population of the United States, gives the increase of the slaves at one and a half per cent. annually, which I think is a refutation of the opinion of labour being a check of so serious a nature as has been contemplated. In the British colonies I have seen instances of large families, though the parents have undergone the regular labour of the plantation; but in Hayti, where very little labour is performed, I was not able to discover a solitary in-

stance of a large family in any part through which I had occasion to travel. In the slave states of the North American Union, the labour of the slaves is as severe as in the British colonies, and on travelling through them I saw as many cases of large families among the slave population as occur among the white people, so that even severe labour is not a check upon increase to such a degree as many are led to imagine.

It must also be remarked, that among the Haytians there are but very few instances of longevity, the males seldom exceeding forty or fifty years of age, and the women probably a year or two more. At the age of thirty, both men and women have the appearance of being prematurely afflicted by the weight of time; the effects, no doubt, of an unrestricted sensual intercourse and other vices, and greatly increased by sloth and indolence. In the slave colonies, on the contrary, men and women will be found at the age of fifty possessing all the health and vigour of their sex, whilst those who have been emancipated, and have imbibed the indolent habits, and pursued the licentious indulgences so characteristic of the negro in a state of uncontrolled liberty, exhibit the decrepitude of age even at forty.

I have offered the foregoing remarks on population with a view to shew that it is impossible that the census taken in 1824 can be correct; and I think

it must appear conclusive, under all the circumstances connected with the state of society, that the large increase of population said to have taken place between the time of Dessalines and the present period, rests upon no authority whatever. The habits of the people manifestly oppose such a supposition. That for several years there has been no increase, I am persuaded; and so long as the people are permitted to indulge in all those excesses which are so prevalent in the country, I am convinced that their number will continue to decrease.

I have but little to advance by way of conclusion to my labours, further than to observe that I trust it will be seen that Hayti has been too much extolled; that the extraordinary and rapid strides said to have been made by its inhabitants, in wealth, morality, and knowledge, is a fiction which has not the slightest foundation; and that, before a change can be effected, ages must roll away and a new people be created. The present race are too hardened in vice to be improved by example, or taught the distinction between that which may benefit the country and that which must prove subversive of the public good. Let loose from restraint, without having been first taught how to enjoy freedom, they have given way to ungovernable passions, and plunged into every species of vice. Feeling only the few wants characteristic of the savage, and those wants easily supplied, they are careless of all consequences, and

never bestow a thought on the future welfare either of their posterity or their country; but go on without the least constraint, fostering and pursuing every evil and pernicious habit. But such a state as this must bring on a crisis of no ordinary danger and difficulty, and Hayti may yet have to endure a repetition of those scenes of trouble and desolation which have marked her career from the revolution; which may shake or perhaps destroy the little fabric which she has raised, and finally bring upon her people all those fatal consequences which spring from morals and habits universally dissolute and relaxed.

Hayti affords us a strong instance of what may be expected from the emancipation of slaves before they have been previously prepared to receive this boon by moral and religious instruction, and a proof that agriculture cannot efficiently be carried on in the colonies if it depend on the labour of the enfranchised slave. Should it be therefore thought expedient to declare the slaves in the British colonies free before they have been prepared for such a measure, and provision be made against the consequences of that sudden ebullition which emancipation would excite, the colonies may be taken leave of for ever as a productive appendage to the crown. Hayti bears me out in this opinion; for that country presents a lasting monument of what may be expected from injudicious emancipation, or what may be effected by free labour. With the finest soil in the world for

all the purposes of tropical agriculture, with seasons the most congenial, with a climate so varied in its temperature as to be peculiarly adapted for the production, of not only tropical plants, but those of America and of Europe also, with a population of labourers equal to her wants, were they moral and industrious,—with all these important advantages naturally adapted to raise her into eminence and wealth, yet has Hayti sunk into the lowest state of poverty and moral degradation. Without agriculture, for the country displays nothing but waste; without commerce, for her harbours are empty, and present no appearance of a revival of trade; with an exhausted treasury and a diminished revenue; with a heavy debt and a debased currency, Hayti must finally be overwhelmed in irretrievable ruin.

One plan however still remains to be tried, by which she may in time perhaps recover her shattered state. Let the people be roused to a sense of their abject condition, and if laws be enacted for the enforcement of cultivation, let them not sleep, but be executed with an unsparing hand, and the penalty which they impose be rigidly inflicted on the disobedient and the indolent. Those mistaken views of philanthropy upon which the government has hitherto proceeded have proved destructive to the country, and the effects of ill-judged leniency are now too heavy to be any longer borne. Coercive measures are now, it is said, to take the place of mild

ones; the people are not to be permitted to pursue their own uncontrolled courses as heretofore, nor the indolent to slumber with impunity. All are to spring forward as with one impulse, to an extended culture of the soil, for the purpose of restoring the country to its ancient condition.

I wish the promise thus held out to the world may be realized, and that the government may still possess sufficient energy to give effect to its declared intention; but I have my doubts of both. The president is incompetent, and the government weak and imbecile; and whilst the present rulers are permitted to hold the reins of the state machine, I for one cannot hope that the country will emerge from that miserable condition into which an unwise policy, and an overstrained and mistaken philanthropy, have unfortunately thrown it. Time, it is said, effects wonderful changes, but I fear no change can take place for the better in Hayti until there be a new race of people, under the dominion of a chief competent to rule them with efficient energy.

THE END.

ERRATA.

Page 55, for "Aux Cazes", and throughout the volume, for "Aux Cases", read "Aux Cayes".

65, for "parish of Acub", read "parish of Acul".

199, and throughout the volume, for "Count Limonde", read "Count Limonade".

215, for "Prince Larnders", read "Prince Saunders".

238, and throughout the volume, for "Sumana", read "Samana".

279, for "L'Arcahaze", read "L'Arcahaye".

296, for "Llamos", read "Llanos".

300, for "Cibas", read "Cibao".

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